



THE  
Maiden & Married Life  
OF  
MARY POWELL,  
*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*



NEW EDITION.

LONDON :  
Printed for ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, & Co.,  
at 25, Paternoster Row.





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Maiden and Married Life  
OF  
MARY POWELL,  
*Afterwards Mistress Milton.*

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JOURNALL.

*Forest Hill, Oxon, May 1st, 1643.*

\* \* \* \*

SEVENTEENTH Birth-  
daye. A Gypfie Woman at the Gate  
woulde faine have tolde my Fortune;  
but *Mother* chafed her away, saying  
he had doubtlesse harboured in some  
of the low Houses in *Oxford*, and  
nighte bring us the Plague. Could  
have cried for Vexation; she had  
promised to tell me the Colour of  
my

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my Husband's Eyes; but *Mother* says she believes I shall never have one, I am soe fillie. *Father* gave me a gold Piece. Dear *Mother* is chafed, methinks, touching this Debt of five hundred Pounds, which *Father* says he knows not how to pay. Indeed, he sayd, overnichte, his whole personal Estate amounts to but five hundred Pounds, his Timber and Wood to four hundred more, or thereabouts; and the Tithes and Messuages of *Whateley* are no great Matter, being mortgaged for about as much moore, and he hath lent Sights of Money to them that won't pay, so 'tis hard to be thus prest. Poor *Father*! 'twas good of him to give me this gold Piece.

May 2nd.

Cousin *Rose* married to Master *Roger Agnew*. Present, *Father*, *Mother*, and *Brother* of *Rose*. *Father*,  
*Mother*,

of Mary Powell.

*Mother, Dick, Bob, Harry, and I ; Squire Paice and his Daughter Audrey ; an olde Aunt of Master Roger's, and one of his Cousins, a stiffe-backed Man with large Eares, and such a long Nose ! Cousin Rose* looked bewtifulle—pitie so faire a Girl should marry so olde a Man—'tis thoughte he wants not manie Years of fifty.

New Misfortunes in the Poultrie Yarde. Poor *Mother's* Loyalty cannot stand the Demands for her best Chickens, Ducklings, &c., for the Use of his Majesty's Officers since the King hath beene in *Oxford*. She accuseth my *Father* of having beene wonne over by a few faire Speeches to be more of a Royalist than his natural Temper inclineth him to ; which, of course, he will not admit.

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Whole Day taken up in a Visit to *Rose*, now a Week married, and growne quite matronlie already. We reached *Sheepscote* about an Hour before Noone. A long, broade, strait Walke of green Turf, planted with Hollyoaks, Sunflowers, &c., and some earlier Flowers already in Bloom, led up to the rusticall Porch of a truly farm-like House, with low gable Roofs, a long lattice Window on either Side the Doore, and three Casements above. Such, and no more, is *Rose's* House! But she is happy, for she came running forthe, soe soone as she hearde *Clover's* Feet, and helped me from my Saddle all smiling, tho' she had not expected to see us. We had Curds and Creame; and she wished it were the Time of Strawberries, for she sayd they had large Beds; and then my *Father* and the Boys went

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went forth to looke for Master Agnew. Then *Rose* took me up to her Chamber, singing as she went; and the long, low Room was sweet with Flowers. Sayd I, "*Rose*, to be Mistres of this pretty Cottage, 'twere hardlie amisse to marry a Man as olde as Master *Roger*." "Olde!" quoth she, "deare *Moll*, you must not deeme him olde; why, he is but forty-two; and am not I twenty-three?" She lookt foe earnest and hurte, that I could not but falle a laughing.

*Mother* gone to *Sandford*. She hopes to get Uncle *John* to lend *Father* this Money. *Father* says she may try. 'Tis harde to discourage her with an ironicalle Smile, when she is doing alle she can, and more than manie Women woulde, to help *Father* in his Difficultie; but fuche, she

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ſhe ſayth ſomewhat bitterlie, is the lot of our Sex. She bade *Father* mind that ſhe had brought him three thouſand Pounds, and aſkt what had come of them. Answered; helped to fille the Mouths of nine healthy Children, and ſtop the Mouth of an eaſie Huſband; ſoe, with a Kiſs, made it up. I have the Keys, and am left Miſtreſſe of alle, to my greate Contentment; but the Children clamour for Sweetmeats, and *Father* ſayth, “Remember, *Moll*, Diſcretion is the “better Part of Valour.”

After *Mother* had left, went into the Paddock, to feed the Colts with Bread; and while they were putting their Noſes into *Robin's* Pockets, *Dick* brought out the two Ponies, and ſet me on one of them, and we had a mad Scamper through the Meadows and down the Lanes; I leading. Juſt at the Turne of *Holford's*

*ford's Close*, came shorte upon a Gentleman walking under the Hedge, clad in a sober, genteel Suit, and of most beautifulle Countenance, with Hair like a Woman's, of a lovely pale brown, long and filky, falling over his Shoulders. I nearlie went over him, for *Clover's* hard Forehead knocked agaynst his Chest; but he stoode it like a Rock; and lookinge firste at me and then at *Dick*, he smiled and spoke to my Brother, who seemed to know him, and turned about and walked by us, sometimes stroaking *Clover's* shaggy Mane. I felte a little ashamed; for *Dick* had sett me on the Poney just as I was, my Gown somewhat too shorte for riding: however, I drewe up my Feet and let *Clover* nibble a little Grasse, and then got rounde to the neare Side, our new Companion stille between us. He offered me  
some

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some wild Flowers, and askt me theire Names; and when I tolde them, he sayd I knew more than he did, though he accounted himselfe a prettie fayre Botaniste: and we went on thus, talking of the Herbs and Simples in the Hedges; and I sayd how prettie some of their Names were, and that, methought, though Adam had named alle the Animals in Paradise, perhaps Eve had named alle the Flowers. He lookt earnestlie at me, on this, and muttered "prettie." Then *Dick* askt of him News from *London*, and he spoke, methought, reservedlie; ever and anon turning his bright, thoughtfulle Eyes on me. At length, we parted at the Turn of the Lane.

I askt *Dick* who he was, and he told me he was one Mr. *John Milton*, the Party to whom *Father* owed five hundred Pounds. He was the Sonne of

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of a *Buckinghamshire* Gentleman, he added, well connected, and very scholarlike, but affected towards the Parliament. His Grandfire, a zealous Papiste, formerly lived in *Oxon*, and disinherited the Father of this Gentleman for abjuring the *Romish* Faith.

When I found how faire a Gentleman was *Father's* Creditor, I became the more interested in deare *Mother's* Successor.

*Dick* began to harpe on another Ride to *Sheepscote* this Morning, and perswaded *Father* to let him have the bay Mare, soe he and I started at aboute Ten o' the Clock. Arrived at Master *Agnew's* Doore, found it open, no one in Parlour or Studdy; soe *Dick* tooke the Horses rounde, and then we went straite thro' the House, into the Garden behind, which

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which is on a rising Ground, with pleached Alleys and turfen Walks, and a Peep of the Church through the Trees. A Lad tolde us his Mistress was with the Bees, soe we walked towards the Hives; and, from an Arbour hard by, hearde a Murmur, though not of Bees, issuing. In this rusticall Bowre, found *Roger Agnew* reading to *Rose* and to *Mr. Milton*. Thereupon ensued manie cheerfulle Salutations, and *Rose* proposed returning to the House, but Master *Agnew* sayd it was pleasanter in the Bowre, where was Room for alle; soe then *Rose* offered to take me to her Chamber to lay aside my Hoode, and promised to send a Jun-kett into the Arbour; whereon *Mr. Agnew* smiled at *Mr. Milton*, and sayd somewhat of "neat-handed *Phillis*."

As we went alonge, I tolde *Rose*

of Mary Powell.

I had seene her Gueft once before,  
and thought him a comely, pleasant  
Gentleman. She laught, and sayd,  
“Pleasant? why, he is one of the  
“greatest Scholars of our Time, and  
“knows more Languages than you  
“or I ever hearde of.” I made  
Answer, “That may be, and yet  
“might not ensure his being plea-  
“sant, but rather the contrary, for  
“I cannot reade *Greeke* and *Latin*,  
“*Rose*, like you.” Quoth *Rose*,  
“But you can reade *English*, and he  
“hath writ some of the loveliest  
“*English* Verses you ever hearde,  
“and hath brought us a new Com-  
“posure this Morning, which *Roger*,  
“being his olde College Friend, was  
“discussing with him, to my greate  
“Pleasure; when you came. After  
“we have eaten the Junkett, he  
“shall beginne it again.” “By no  
“Means,” said I, “for I love Talking  
“more

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“ more than Reading.” However, it was not soe to be, for *Rose* would not be soyled; and as it would not have been good Manners to decline the Hearinge in Presence of the Poet, I was constrayned to suppress a secret Yawne, and feign Attention, though, Truth to say, it soone wandered; and, during the last halfe Hour, I sat in a compleat Dreame, tho’ not unpleasant one. *Roger* having made an End, ’twas diverting to heare him commending the Piece unto the Author, who as gravely accepted it; yet, with nothing fullesome about the one, or misproud about the other. Indeed, there was a sedate Sweetnesse in the Poet’s Wordes as well as Lookes; and shortlie, waiving the Discussion of his owne Composures, he beganne to talke of those of other Men, as *Shakspeare*, *Spenser*, *Cowley*, *Ben Jonson*,

of Mary Powell.

*Jonson*, and of *Tasso*, and *Tasso's*  
Friend the Marquis of *Villa*, whome,  
it appeared, Mr. *Milton* had Know-  
ledge of in *Italy*. Then he askt me,  
woulde I not willingly have seene  
the Country of *Romeo* and *Juliet*,  
and prest to know whether I loved  
Poetry; but finding me loath to tell,  
sayd he doubted not I preferred Ro-  
mances, and that he had read manie,  
and loved them dearly too. I sayd,  
I loved *Shakspeare's* Plays better than  
*Sidney's Arcadia*; on which he cried  
“Righte,” and drew nearer to me,  
and woulde have talked at greater  
length; but, knowing from *Rose*  
how learned he was, I feared to  
shew him I was a fillie Foole; foe,  
like a fillie Foole, held my Tongue.  
Dinner; Eggs, Bacon, roast Ribs  
of Lamb, Spinach, Potatoes, fa-  
voury Pie, a *Brentford* Pudding,  
and Cheefecakes. What a pretty  
Houfewise

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Houſewife *Rofe* is! *Roger's* plain Hoſpitalitie and ſcholarlie Diſcourſe appeared to much Advantage. He aſkt of News from *Paris*; and Mr. *Milton* ſpoke much of the *Swediſh* Ambaſſadour, *Dutch* by Birth; a Man renowned for his Learning, Magnanimity, and Misfortunes, of whome he had ſeene much. He tolde *Rofe* and me how this Miſter *Van der Groote* had beene unjuſtlic caſte into Priſon by his Countrymen; and how his good Wife had ſhared his Captivitie, and had tried to get his Sentence reverſed; failing which, ſhe contrived his Escape in a big Cheſt, which ſhe pretended to be full of heavie olde Bookes. Mr. *Milton* concluded with the Exclamation, “Indeede, there never was ſuch a Woman;” on which, deare *Roger*, whome I beginne to love, quoth, “Oh yes, there are manie  
“ ſuch,

“such,—we have two at Table  
“now.” Whercat, Mr. *Milton*  
smiled.

At Leave-taking pressed Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* to come and see us  
soone; and *Dick* askt Mr. *Milton*  
to see the Bowling Greene.

Ride Home, delightfule.

Thought, when I woke this Morn-  
ing, I had been dreaminge of St.  
*Paul* let down the Wall in a Basket;  
but founde, on more closely examin-  
ing the Matter, 'twas *Grotius* carried  
down the Ladder in a Chest; and  
methought I was' his Wife, leaninge  
from the Window above, and crying  
to the Souldiers, “Have a Care, have  
a Care!” 'Tis certayn I shoulde have  
betraied him by an Over-anxietie.

Resolved to give *Father* a *Sheepscote*  
Dinner, but *Margery* affirmed  
the Haunch woulde no longer keepe,  
fo

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so was forced to have it drest, though meaninge to have kept it for Companie. Little *Kate*, who had been out alle the Morning, came in with her Lap full of Butter-burs, the which I was glad to see, as *Mother* esteemes them a sovereign Remedie 'gainst the Plague, which is like to be rife in *Oxford* this Summer, the Citie being so overcrowded on account of his Majestie. While laying them out on the Stille-room Floor, in bursts *Robin* to say Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* were with *Father* at the Bowling Greene, and woulde dine here. Soe was glad *Margery* had put down the Haunch. 'Twas past One o' the Clock, however, before it coulde be sett on Table; and I had just run up to pin on my Carnation Knots, when I hearde them alle come in discoursing merrilie.

At Dinner Mr. *Milton* askt *Robin*  
of

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of his Studdies; and I was in Payne  
for the deare Boy, knowing him to  
be better affected to his out-doore  
Recreations than to his Booke; but  
he answered boldlie he was in *Ovid*,  
and I lookt in Mr. *Milton's* Face to  
guesse was that goode Scholarship  
or no; but he turned it towards my  
*Father*, and sayd he was trying an  
Experiment on two young Nephews  
of his owne, whether the reading  
those Authors mighte not advantage them  
Subjects mighte not advantage them  
more than the Poets; whereat my  
*Father* jested with him, he being  
himselfe one of the Fraternitie he  
seemed to despise. But he uphelde  
his Argumente so bravelie, that  
*Father* listened in earnest Silence.  
Meantime, the Cloth being drawne,  
and I in Feare of remaining over  
long, was avised to withdrawe my-  
selfe earlie, *Robin* following, and  
begging

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begging me to goe downe to the Fish-ponds. Afterwards alle the others joyned us, and we sate on the Steps till the Sun went down, when, the Horses being broughte round, our Guests tooke Leave without returning to the House. *Father* walked thoughtfullie Home with me, leaning on my Shoulder, and spake little.

May 15th

After writing the above last Night, in my Chamber, went to Bed and had a most heavenlie Dreame. Methoughte it was brighte, brighte Moonlighte, and I was walking with *Mr. Milton* on a Terrace,—not *our* Terrace, but in some outlandish Place; and it had Flights and Flights of green Marble Steps, descending, I cannot tell how farre, with Stone Figures and Vases on everie one. We went downe and downe these Steps,

of Mary Powell.

Steps, till we came to a faire Picce  
of Water, still in the Moonlighte;  
and then, methoughte, he woulde  
be taking Leave, and sayd much  
aboute Absence and Sorrowe, as  
tho' we had knowne each other  
some Space; and alle that he sayd  
was delightfulle to heare. Of a  
suddain we hearde Cries, as of Dis-  
tresse, in a Wood that came quite  
down to the Water's Edge, and Mr.  
*Milton* sayd, "Hearken!" and then,  
"There is some one being slaine in  
the Woode, I must goe to rescue  
him;" and soe, drew his Sword  
and ran off. Meanwhile, the Cries  
continued, but I did not seeme to  
mind them much; and, looking  
stedfastlie downe into the cleare  
Water, coulde see to an inmeasur-  
able Depth, and beheld, oh, rare!  
Girls sitting on glistening Rocks,  
far downe beneath, combing and  
braiding

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braiding their brighte Hair, and talking and laughing, onlie I coulde not.heare aboute what. And their Kirtles were like spun Glass, and their Bracelets Coral and Pearl; and I thought it the fairest Sight that Eyes coulde see. But, alle at once, the Cries in the Wood afrighted them, for they started, looked upwards and alle aboute, and began swimming thro' the cleare Water so fast, that it became troublcd and thick, and I coulde sce them noc more. Then I was aware that the Voices in the Wood were of *Dick* and *Harry*, calling for *me*; and I soughte to answer, "Here!" but my Tongue was heavie. Then I commenced running towards them, through ever so manic greene Paths, in the Wood; but still, we coulde never meet; and I began to sce grinning Faces, neither of Man nor Beast,

of Mary Powell.

Beaste, peeping at me through the  
Trees; and one and another of them  
called me by Name; and in greate  
Feare and Paine I awoke!

\* \* \* \* Strange Things are  
Dreames. Dear *Mother* thinks much  
of them, and sayth they oft portend  
coming Events. My *Father* holdeth  
the Opinion that they are rather  
made up of what hath alreadie come  
to passe; but surelie naught like this  
Dreame of mine hath in anie Part  
befallen me hithertoe?

\* \* \* \* What strange Fable  
or Masque were they reading that  
Day at *Sheepscote*? I mind not.

Too much buied of late to write,  
though much hath happened which  
I woulde fain remember. Dined at  
*Shotover* yesterday. Met *Mother*,  
who is coming Home in a Day or  
two, but helde short Speech with  
me

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me aside concerning Houfewifery. The *Agnews* there, of courfe: alfoe Mr. *Milton*, whom we have feene continuallie, lately; and I know not how it fhoulde be, but he feemeth to like me. *Father* affects him much, but *Mother* loveth him not. She hath feene little of him: perhaps the lefs the better. *Ralph Hewlett*, as usuall, forward in his rough Endeavours to please; but, though no Scholar, I have yet Sense enough to prefer Mr. *Milton's* Discourse to his. \* \* \* \* I wish I were fonder of Studdy; but, since it cannot be, what need to vex? Some are born of one Mind, some of another. *Rose* was alwaies for her Booke; and, had *Rose* beene no Scholar, Mr. *Agnew* woulde, may be, never have given her a second Thought: but alle are not of the fame Way of thinking.

of Mary Powell.

\* \* \* \* A few Lines received  
from *Mother's* "spoilt Boy," as *Fa-  
ther* hath called Brother *Bill*, ever  
since he went a soldiering. Blurred  
and mis-spelt as they are, she will  
prize them. Trulie, we are none  
of us grate hands at the Pen; 'tis  
well I make this my Copie-booke.

\* \* \* \* Oh, strange Event!  
Can this be Happinesse? Why,  
then, am I soe feared, soe mazed,  
soe prone to weeping? I woulde  
that *Mother* were here. Lord have  
Mercie on me a sinfull, fillie Girl,  
and guide my Steps arighte.

\* \* \* \* It seemes like a Dreame,  
(I have done noughte but dreame of  
late, I think,) my going along the  
matted Passage, and hearing Voices  
in my *Father's* Chamber, just as my  
Hand was on the Latch; and going  
withdrawing my Hand, and going  
softlie away, though I never paused  
at

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at disturbing him before ; and, after I had beene a full Houre in the Stille Room, turning over ever soe manie Trays full of dried Herbs and Flower-leaves, hearing him come forth and call, "*Moll*, deare *Moll*," "where are you?" with I know not what of strange in the Tone of his Voice ; and my running to him hastilie, and his drawing me into his Chamber, and closing the Doore. Then he takes me round the Waiste, and remains quite silent awhile ; I gazing on him so strangelic ! and at length, he says with a Kind of Sigh, "Thou art indeed but young yet ! "scaree seventeen,—and fresh, as "*Mr. Milton* says, as the earlie May ; "too tender, forsooth, to leave us "yet, sweet Child ! But what wilt "say, *Moll*, when I tell thee that a "well-esteemed Gentleman, whom "as yet indeed I know too little of, "hath

of Mary Powell.

“hath craved of me Access to the  
“House as one that would win  
“your Favour?”

Thereupon, such a suddain Faint-  
ness of the Spiritts overtooke me,  
(a Thing I am noe way subject to,)  
as that I fell down in a Swound at  
*Father's* Feet; and when I came to  
myselfe agayn, my Hands and Feet  
seemed full of Prickles, and there  
was a Humming, as of *Rose's* Bees,  
in mine Ears. *Lettice* and *Margery*  
were tending of me, and *Father*  
watching me full of Care; but soe  
soone as he saw me open mine Eyes,  
he bade the Maids stand aside, and  
sayd, stooping over me, “Enough,  
“dear *Moll*; we will talk noe more  
“of this at present.” “Onlie just  
“tell me,” quoth I, in a Whisper,  
“who it is.” “Guesse,” sayd he.  
“I cannot,” I softlie replied; and,  
with the Lie, came such a Rush of  
Blood

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Blood to my Cheeks as betraied me.  
 "I am sure you have though," sayd  
 deare *Father*, gravelie, "and I neede  
 "not say it is *Mr. Milton*, of whome  
 "I know little more than you doe,  
 "and that is not enough. On the  
 "other Hand, *Roger Agnew* sayth  
 "that he is one of whome we  
 "can never know too much, and  
 "there is somewhat about him  
 "which inclines me to believe it."  
 "What will *Mother* say?" inter-  
 rupted I. Thereat *Father's* Coun-  
 tenance changed; and he hastilie  
 answered, "Whatever she likes: I  
 "have an Answer for her, and a  
 "Question too;" and abruptlie left  
 me, bidding me keepe myselfe quiet.

But can I? Oh, no! *Father* hath  
 sett a Stone rolling, unwitting of its  
 Course. It hath prostrated me in  
 the first Instance, and will, I mis-  
 doubt, hurt my *Mother*. *Father* is  
 bold

of Mary Powell.

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bold enow in her Absence, but when she comes back will leave me to face her Anger alone; or else, make such a Stir to shew that he is not governed by a Woman, as wille make Things worfe. Meanwhile, how woulde I have them? Am I most pleased or payned? dismayed or flattered? Indeed, I know not.

\* \* \* \* I am soe sorry to have swooned. . Needed I have done it, merelie to heare there was one who foughte my Favour? Aye, but one soe wise! so thoughtfulle! so unlike me!

*Bedtime; same Daye.*

\* \* \* \* Who knoweth what a Daye will bring forth? After writing the above, I fate like one stupid, ruminating on I know not what, except on the Unlikelihood that one soe wise woulde trouble himselfe to *seeke* for aught and yet fail to *win*.

After

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After abiding a long Space in mine owne Chamber, alle below seeming still, I began to wonder shoulde we dine alone or not, and to have a hundred hot and cold Fitts of Hope and -Feare. Thought I, if Mr. *Milton* comes, assuredlie I cannot goe down; but yet I must; but yet I will not; but yet the best will be to conduct myselfe as though nothing had happened; and, as he seems to have left the House long ago, maybe he hath returned to *Sheepscote*, or even to *London*. Oh that *London*! Shall I indeede ever see it? and the rare Shops, and the Play-houses, and *Paul's*, and the *Towre*? But what and if that ever comes to pass? Must I leave Home? dear *Forest Hill*? and *Father* and *Mother*, and the Boys? more especiallie *Robin*? Ah! but *Father* will give me a long Time to think of it. He will, and must.

Then

of Mary Powell.

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Then Dinner-time came; and, with Dinner-time, Uncle *Hewlett* and *Ralph*, Squire *Paice* and Mr. *Milton*. We had a huge Sirloin, soe no Feare of short Commons. I was not ill pleased to see soe manie: it gave me an Excuse for holding my Peace, but I coulde have wished for another Woman. However, *Father* never thinks of that, and *Mother* will soone be Home. After Dinner the elder Men went to the Bowling-greene with *Dick* and *Ralph*; the Boys to the Fish-ponds; and, or ever I was aware, Mr. *Milton* was walking with me on the Terrace. My Dreame came soe forcibly to Mind, that my Heart seemed to leap into my Mouth; but he kept away from the Fish-ponds, and from Leave-taking, and from his morning Discourse with my *Father*,—at least  
for

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for awhile; but some Way he got round to it, and sayd foe much, and foe well, that, after alle my *Father's* bidding me keepe quiete and take my Time, and mine owne Resolution to think much and long, he never rested till he had changed the whole Appearance of Things, and made me promise to be his, wholly and trulie.—And oh! I feare I have been too quickly wonne!

May 23d

*May 23d.* At leaste, so sayeth the Calendar; but with me it hath beene trulie an *April* Daye, alle Smiles and Teares. And now my Spiritts are foe perturbed and dismaid, as that I know not whether to weepe or no, for methinks crying would relieve me. At first waking this Morning my Mind was elated at the Falsitie of my *Mother's* Notion, that no Man of Sense would think  
me

of Mary Powell.

me worth the having; and soe I got up too proude, I think, and came down too vain, for I had spent an unusuall Time at the Glasse. My Spiritts, alsoe, were soe unequall, that the Boys took Notice of it, and it seemed as though I coulde breathe nowhere but out of Doors; so the Children and I had a rare Game of Play in the Home-closet; but ever and anon I kept looking towards the Road and listening for Horses' Feet, till *Robin* sayd, "One would think "the King was coming:" but at last came Mr. *Milton*, quite another Way, walking through the Fields with huge Strides. *Kate* saw him firste, and tolde me; and then sayd, "What makes you look soe pale?"

\* \* \* \* \*

We fate a good Space under the Hawthorn Hedge on the Brow of the Hill, listening to the Mower's Scythe,

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Scythe, and the Song of Birds, which seemed enough for him, without talking; and as he spake not, I helde my Peace, till, with the Sun in my Eyes, I was like to drop asleep; which, as his own Face was *from* me, and towards the Landskip, he notcd not. I was just aiming, for Mirthe's Sake, to steale away, when he suddainlie turned about and fell to speaking of rurall Life, Happinesse, Heaven, and such like, in a Kind of Rapture; then, with his Elbow half raising him from the Grass, lay looking at me; then commenced humming or singing I know not what Strayn, but 'twas of '*begli Occhi*' and '*Chioma aurata*;' and he kept smiling the while he sang.

After a time we went In-doors; and then came my firste Pang: for *Father* founde out how I had pledged  
myselfe

of Mary Powell.

myselfe overnichte; and for a Moment looked soe grave, that my Heart misgave me for having beene soe hastie. However, it soone passed off; deare *Father's* Countenance cleared, and he even seemed merrie at Table; and soon after Dinner alle the Party dispersed save Mr. *Milton*, who loitered with me on the Terrace. After a short Silence he exclaimed, "How good is our  
" God to us in alle his Gifts! For  
" Instance, in this Gift of *Love*,  
" whereby had he withdrawn from  
" visible Nature a thousand of its  
" glorious Features and gay Colour-  
" ings, we shoulde stille possess, *from*  
" *within*, the Means of throwing  
" over her clouded Face an entirelie  
" different Hue! while as it is, what  
" was pleasing before now pleaseth  
" more than ever! Is it not soe.  
" sweet *Mell*? May I express thy  
" Feelings.

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“Feelings as well as mine own,  
“unblamed? or am I too adven-  
“turous? You are silent; well,  
“then, let me believe that we think  
“alike, and that the Emotions of  
“the few laste Hours have given  
“such an Impulse to alle that is  
“high, and sweete, and deepe, and  
“pure, and holy in our innermoste  
“Hearts, as that we seeme now  
“onlie firste to taste the *Life of*  
“*Life*, and to perceiue how much  
“nearer Earth is to Heaven than  
“we thought! Is it soe? Is it not  
“soe?” and I was constrayned to  
say, “Yes,” at I scarceelie knew  
what; grudginglie too, for I feared  
having once alreadie sayd “Yes”  
too soone. But he saw nought  
amisse, for he was expecting nought  
amisse; soe went on, most like Truth  
and Love that Lookes could speake  
or Words sounde: “Oh, I know  
“it,

of Mary Powell.

“ it, I feel it :—henceforth there  
“ is a Life reserved for us in which  
“ Angels may sympathize. For this  
“ most excellent Gift of Love shall  
“ enable us to read together the  
“ whole Booke of Sanctity and Vir-  
“ tue, and emulate each other in  
“ carrying it into Practice; and as  
“ the wise *Magians* kept their Eyes  
“ steadfastly fixed on the Star, and  
“ followed it right on, through  
“ rough and smooth, so we, with  
“ this bright Beacon, which indeed  
“ is set on Fire of Heaven, shall  
“ pass on through the peaceful  
“ Studies, surmounted Adversities,  
“ and victorious Agonies of Life,  
“ ever looking steadfastly up!”

Alas this, and much more, as  
tedious to hear as to write, did I  
listen to, first with flagging Atten-  
tion, next with concealed Weariness;  
—and as Weariness, if in-  
dulged,

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dulged, never *is* long concealed, it soe chanced, by Ill-luck, that Mr. *Milton*, suddainlie turning his Eyes from Heaven upon poor me, caughte, I can scarcelie expresse how slighte, an Indication of Discomforte in my Face; and instantlie a Cloud crossed his owne, though as thin as that through which the Sun shines while it floats over him. Oh, 'twas not of a Moment! and yet *in that Moment* we seemed eache to have seene the other, though but at a Glance, under new Circumstances:—as though two Persons at a Masquerade had just removed their Masques and put them on agayn. This gave me my seconde Pang:—I felt I had given him Payn; and though he made as though he forgot it directly, and I tooke Payns to make him forget it, I coude never be quite sure whether he had.

My

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*of Mary Powell.*

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\* \* \* \* My Spiritts were soe dashed by this, and by learning his Age to be soe much more than I had deemed it, (for he is thirty-five! who coulde have thoughte it?) that I had, thenceforth, the Aire of being much more discrete and pensive than belongeth to my Nature; whereby he was, perhaps, well pleased. As I became more grave he became more gay; soe that we met each other, as it were, half-way, and became righte pleasant. If his Countenance were comely before, it is quite heavenlie now; and yet I question whether my Love increaseth as rapidlie as my Feare. Surelie my Folly will prove as distastefull to him, as his over-much Wisdom to me. The Dread of it hath alarmed me already. What has become, even now, of all my gay Visions of Marriage,  
and

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and *London*, and the Play-houses, and the *Towre*? They have faded away thus earlie, and in their Place comes a Foreboding of I can scarce say what. I am as if a Child, receiving from some olde Fairy the Gift of what seemed a fayre Doll's House, shoulde hastilie open the Doore thereof, and starte back at beholding nought within but a huge Cavern, deepe, high, and vaste; in parte glittering with glorious Chrystals, and the Rest hidden in obscure Darknesse.

May 24th.

Deare *Rose* came this Morning. I flew forthe to welcome her, and as I drew near, she lookt upon me with such a Kind of Awe as that I could not forbear laughing. Mr. *Milton* having slept at *Sheepscoate*, had made her privy to our Engagement; for indeede, he and Mr. *Agnew*  
are

of Mary Powell.

are such Friends, he will keep nothing from him. Thus *Rose* heares it before my owne Mother, which shoulde not be. When we had entered my Chamber, she embraced me once and agayn, and seemed to think soe much of my uncommon Fortune, that I beganne to think more of it myselfe. To heare her talke of Mr. *Milton* one would have supposed her more in Love with him than I. Like a Bookworm as she is, she fell to praysing his Composures. "Oh, the leaste I care for in him is "his Versing," quoth I; and from that Moment a Spiritt of Mischief tooke Possession of me, to do a thousand heedlesse, ridiculous Things throughoute the Day, to shew *Rose* how little I set by the Opinion of soe wise a Man. Once or twice Mr. *Milton* lookt earnestlie and questioningly at me, but I heeded him not.

Discontinue

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\* \* \* \* Discourse at Table graver and less pleasant, methoughte, than heretofore. Mr. *Busire* having dropt in, was avised to ask Mr. *Milton* why, having had an university Education, he had not entered the Church. He replied, drylie enough, because he woulde not subscribe himselfe *Slave* to anie Formularies of Men's making. I saw *Father* bite his Lip; and *Roger Agnew* mildly observed, he thought him wrong; for that it was not for an Individual to make Rules for another Individual, but yet that the generall Voice of the Wise and Good, removed from the pettie Prejudices of private Feeling, mighte pronounce authoritativelie wherein an Individual was righte or wrong, and frame Laws to keepe him in the righte Path. Mr. *Milton* replied, that manie Fallibles could no more make up an Infalible than manie

of Mary Powell.

manie Finites could make an Infinite. Mr. *Agnew* rejoyned, that ne'erthelesse, an Individual who opposed himselfe agaynst the generall Current of the Wise and Good, was, leasle of alle, likelie to be in the Right; and that the Limitations of human Intellect which made the Judgment of manie wise Men liable to Question, certainlie made the Judgment of *anie* wise Man, self-dependent, more questionable still. Mr. *Milton* shortlie replied that there were Particulars in the required Oaths which made him unable to take them without Perjurie. And soe, an End: but 'twas worth a World to see *Rosé* looking soe anxiously from the one Speaker to the other, desirous that each should be victorious; and I was sorry that it lasted not a little longer.

As *Rosé* and I tooke our Way to  
the

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the Summer-house, she put her Arm round me, saying, "How charming " is divine Philosophie!" I could not helpe asking if she did not meane how charming was the Philosophie of one particular Divine? Soe then she discoursed with me of Things more seemlie for Women than Philosophie or Divinitie either. Onlie, when Mr. *Agnew* and Mr. *Milton* joyned us, she woulde aske them to repeat one Piece of Poetry after another, beginning with *Carew's*—

*"He who loves a rosie Cheeke,  
Or a coral Lip admires,—"*

And crying at the End of eache, "Is not that lovely? Is not that " divine?" I franklie sayd I liked none of them soe much as some Mr. *Agnew* had recited, concluding with—

*"Mortals*

of Mary Powell.

*“ Mortals that would, follow me,  
Love Virtue: she alone is free.”*

Whereon Mr. *Milton* surpris'd me with a suddain Kifs, to the immoderate Mirth of *Rose*, who sayd I coulde not have looked more discomposed had he pretended he was the Author of those Verses. I afterwards found he *was*; but I think she laught more than there was neede.

We have ever been considered a sufficientlie religious Familie: that is, we goe regularly to Church on Sabbaths and Prayer-dayes, and keepe alle the Fasts and Festivalles. But Mr. *Milton's* Devotion hath attayned a Pitch I can neither imitate nor even comprehend. The spirituall World seemeth to him not onlie reall, but I may almoste say visible. For instance, he tolde *Rose*,  
it

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it appears, that on *Tuesday* Nighte, (that is the same Evening I had promised to be his,) as he went homewards to his Farm-lodging, he fancied the Angels whisperinge in his Eares, and singing over his Head, and that instead of going to his Bed like a reasonable Being, he lay down on the Grass, and gazed on the sweete, pale Moon till she sett, and then on the bright Starres till he seemed to see them moving in a slowe, solemn Dance, to the Words, "*How glorious is our God!*" And alle about him, he said, he *knew*, tho' he coulde not see them, were spirituall Beings repairing the Ravages of the Day on the Flowers, amonge the Trees, and Grasse, and Hedges; and he believed 'twas onlie the Filme that originall Sin had spread over his Eyes, that prevented his seeing them. I am thankful for  
this

of Mary Powell.

this same Filme,—I cannot abide  
Fairies, and Witches, and Ghosts—  
ugh! I shudder even to write of  
them; and were it onlie of the  
more harmlesse Sort, one woulde  
never have the Comforte of think-  
inge to be alone. I feare Church-  
yardes and dark Corners of alle  
Kinds; more especiallie Spiritts;  
and there is onlie one I would even  
wish to see at my bravest, when  
deepe Love casteth out Feare; and  
that is of Sister *Anne*, whome I  
never associate with the Worme and  
Winding-sheete. Oh no! I think  
*she*, at leaste, dwells amonge the  
Starres, having sprung straite up  
into Lighte and Blisse the Moment  
she put off Mortalitie; and if she,  
why not others? Are *Adam* and  
*Abraham* alle these Yeares in the  
unconscious Tomb? Their Bodies,  
but surely not their Spiritts? else,  
why

1643.

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of Mary Powell.

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why dothe *Christ* speak of *Lazarus* lying in *Abraham's* Bosom, while the Brothers of *Dives* are yet riotouslie living? Yet what becomes of the Daye of generall Judgment, if some be thus pre-judged? I must aske Mr. *Milton*,—yes, I thinke I can finde it in my Heart to aske him about this in some solemn, stille Hour, and perhaps he will sett at Rest manie Doubts and Misgivings that at fundrie Times trouble me; being soe wise a Man.

*Bedtime.*

\* \* \* \* Glad to steale away from the noisie Companie in the Supper-roome, (comprising some of *Father's* Fellow-magistrates,) I went down with *Robin* and *Kate* to the Fish-ponds; it was scarce Sunset: and there, while we threw Crumbs to the Fish and watched them come  
to.

of Mary Powell.

to the Surface, were followed, or ever we were aware, by Mr. *Milton*, who sat down on the stone Seat, drew *Robin* between his Knees, stroked his Haire, and askt what we were talking about. *Robin* sayd I had beene telling them a fairie Story; and Mr. *Milton* observed that was an infinite Improvement on the jangling, puzzle-headed Prating of Country Justices, and wished I woulde tell it agayn. But I was afrayd. But *Robin* had no Feares; soe tolde the Tale roundlie; onlie he forgot the End. Soe he found his Way backe to the Middle, and seemed likelic to make it last alle Night; onlie Mr. *Milton* sayd he seemed to have got into the Labyrinth of *Cret*, and he must for Pitie's Sake give him the Clew. Soe he finished *Robin's* Story, and then tolde another, a most lovelie one.

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one, of Ladies, and Princes, and Enchanters, and a brazen Horse, and he sayd the End of *that* Tale had been cut off too, by Reason the Writer had died before he finished it. But *Robin* cryed, "Oh! finish "this too," and hugged and kist him; soe he did; and methoughte the End was better than the Beginninge. Then he sayd, "Now, "sweet *Moll*, you have onlie spoken "this Hour past, by your Eyes; "and we must heare your pleasant "Voice." "An Hour?" cries *Robin*. "Where are alle the red "Clouds gone, then?" quoth Mr. *Milton*, "and what Business hathe "the Moon yonder?" "Then we "must go Indoors," quoth I. But they cried "No," and *Robin* helde me fast, and Mr. *Milton* sayd I might know even by the distant Sounds of ill-governed Merriment that we  
were

of Mary Powell.

were winding up the Week's Accounts of Joy and Care more consistentlie where we were than we coulde doe in the House. And indeede just then I hearde my *Father's* Voice swelling a noisie Chorus; and hoping Mr. *Milton* did not distinguish it, I askt him if he loved Musick. He answered, soe much that it was Miseric for him to hear anie that was not of the beste. I secretlie resolved he should never heare mine. He added, he was come of a musicall Familie, and that his Father not onlie sang well, but played finely on the Viol and Organ. Then he spake of the sweet Musick in *Italy*, untill I longed to be there; but I tolde him nothing in its Way ever pleased me more than to heare the Choristers of *Magdalen* College utter in *May* Day by chaunting a Hymn at the Top of the

1643.

the Church Towre. Discourfing of this and that, we thus fate a good While ere we returned to the Houfe.

\* \* \* \* Coming out of Church he woulde fhun the common Field, where the Villagery led up their Sports, faying, he deemed Quoitt-playing and the like to be unfuitable Recreations on a Daye whereupon the *Lord* had reſtricted us from ſpeakinge our own Words, and thinking our own (that is, ſecular) Thoughts: and that he believed the Law of *God* in this Partieular woulde ſoone be the Law of the Land, for Parliament woulde ſhortlie put down *Sunday* Sports. I aſkt, "What, the "*King's* Parliament at *Oxford*?" He answered, "No; *the Country's* Parliament at *Weſtminſter*." I ſayd, I was ſorrie, for manie poore hard-working Men had no other Holiday.

He

of Mary Powell.

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He sayd, another Holiday woulde be given them; and that whether or no, we must not connive at Evil, which we doe in permitting an *holy Daye* to sink into a Holiday. I sayd, but was it not the *Jewish* Law, which had made such Restrictions? He sayd, yes, but that *Christ* came not to destroy the moral Law, of which Sabbath-keeping was a Part, and that even its naturall Fittesse for the bodily Welfare of Man and Beast was such as no wise Legislator would abolish or abuse it, even had he no Consideration for our spiritual and immortal Part: and that 'twas a well-known Fact that Beasts of Burthen, which had not one Daye of Rest in seven, did lesse Worke in the End. As for oure Soules, he sayd, they required their spiritual Meale as much as our Bodies required theirs; and even poore, rusticall

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rusticall Clownes who coulde not reade, mighte nourish their better Parts by an holie Pause, and by looking within them, and around them, and above them. I felt inclined to tell him that long Sermons alwaies seemed to make me love God less insteade of more, but woulde not, fearing he mighte take it that I meant *he* had been giving me one.

Monday.

*Mother* hath returned! The Moment I hearde her Voice I fell to trembling. At the same Moment I hearde *Robin* cry, "Oh, *Mother*, I " have broken the greene Beaker!" which betraied Apprehension in another Quarter. However, she quite mildlie replied, "Ah, I knew the " Handle was loose," and then kist me with soe great Affection that I felt quite easie. She had beene withhelde by a troublesome Colde  
from

from returning at the appointed Time, and cared not to write. 'Twas just Supper-time, and there were the Children to kiss and to give their Bread and Milk, and *Bill's* Letter to read; soe that nothing particular was sayd till the younger Ones were gone to Bed, and *Father* and *Mother* were taking some Wine and Toast. Then says *Father*, "Well, Wife, have you got the five hundred Pounds?" "No," she answers, rather careleslie. "I tolde you how 'twoulde be," says *Father*; "you mighte as well have stayed at Home." "Really, Mr. *Powell*," says *Mother*, "soe seldom as I stir from my owne Chimney-corner, you neede not to grudge me, I think, a few Dayes among our mutuall Relatives." "I shall goe to Gaol," says *Father*. "Non-sense," says *Mother*; "to Gaol indeed!"

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“indeed!” “Well, then, who is  
“to keepe me from it?” says *Fa-  
ther*, laughing. “I will answer for  
“it, *Mr. Milton* will wait a little  
“longer for his Money,” says *Mo-  
ther*, “he is an honourable Man,  
“I suppose.” “I wish he may  
“thinke me one,” says *Father*;  
“and as to a little longer, what is  
“the goode of waiting for what  
“is as unlikelie to come eventuellie  
“as now?” “You must answer  
“that for yourselfe,” says *Mother*,  
looking wearie: “I have done what  
“I can, and can doe no more.”  
“Well, then, ’tis lucky Matters  
“stand as they do,” says *Father*.  
“*Mr. Milton* has been much here in  
“your Absence, my Dear, and has  
“taken a Liking to our *Mell*; soe,  
“believing him, as you say, to be  
“an honourable Man, I have pro-  
“mised he shall have her.” “Non-  
sense,”

of Mary Powell.

“sense,” cries *Mother*, turning red and then pale. “Never farther from Nonsense,” says *Father*, “for ‘tis to be, and by the Ende of the Month too.” “You are bantering me, Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*. “How can you suppose soe, my Deare?” says *Father*, “you doe me Injustice.” “Why, *Moll*!” cries *Mother*, turning sharplie towards me, as I sat mute and fearfull, “what is alle this, Child?” “You cannot, you dare not think of wedding this round-headed Puritan.” “Not round-headed,” sayd I, trembling; “his Haire is as long and curled as mine.” “Don’t bandy Words with me, Girl,” says *Mother* passionatelie, “see how unfit you are to have a House of your owne, who cannot be left in Charge of your *Father*’s for a P. night, without falling into Mischief!”

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“Mischiefe!” “I won’t have *Moll* chidden in that Way,” says *Father*, “she has fallen into noe Mischiefe, and has beene a discreete and dutifull Child.” “Then it has beene alle your doing,” says *Mother*, “and you have forced the Child into this Match.” “Noe Forcing whatever,” says *Father*, “they like one another, and I am very glad of it, for it happens to be very convenient.” “Convenient, indeed,” repeats *Mother*, and falls a weeping. Thereon I must needs weepe too, but she says, “Begone to Bed; there is noe Neede that you shoulde sit by to heare your owne *Father* confesse what a Fool he has beene.”

To my Bedroom I have come, but cannot yet seek my Bed; the more as I still heare their Voices in Contention below.

Tuesday.

of Mary Powell.

This Morninge's Breakfast was moste uncomfortable, I feeling like a checkt Child, scarce minding to looke up or to eat. *Mother*, with Eyes red and swollen, scarce speaking save to the Children; *Father* directing his Discourse chieflie to *Dick*, concerning Farm Matters and the Rangership of *Shotover*, tho' 'twas easie to see his Mind was not with them. Soe soone as alle had dispersed to theire customed Taskes, and I was loitering at the Window, *Father* calls aloud to me from his Studdy. Thither I go, and find him and *Mother*, she sitting with her Back to both. "*Mell*," says *Father*, with great Determination, "you have accepted Mr. *Milton* to please yourself, you will marry him out of hand to please me." "Spare me, spare me, Mr. *P*," interrupts *Mother*, "if the Engagement may  
" not

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“not be broken off, at the least  
“precipitate it not with this in-  
“decent haste. Postpone it till ——”  
“Till when?” says *Father*. “Till  
“the Child is olde enough to know  
“her owne *Mind*.” “That is, to  
“put off an honourable Man on  
“false Pretences,” says *Father*, “she  
“is olde enough to know it already.  
“Speake, *Moll*, are you of your  
“*Mother’s* *Mind* to give up Mr.  
“*Milton* altogether?” I trembled,  
but sayd, “No.” “Then, as his  
“Time is precious, and he knows  
“not when he may leave his Home  
“agayn, I save you the Trouble,  
“Child, of naming a Day, for it  
“shall be the *Monday* before *Whit-*  
“*suntide*.” Thereat *Mother* gave  
a Kind of Groan; but as for me,  
I had like to have fallen on the  
Ground, for I had had noe Thought  
of suche Haste. “See what you are  
doing.”

of Mary Powell.

“doing; Mr. *Powell*,” says *Mother*,  
compassionating me, and raising me  
up, though somewhat roughlie;  
“I prophetic Evil of this Match.”  
“Prophets of Evil are sure to find  
“Listeners,” says *Father*, “but I am  
“not one of them;” and soe left  
the Room. Thereon my *Mother*,  
who alwaies feares him when he  
has a Fit of Determination, loosed  
the Bounds of her Passion, and chid  
me so unkindlie, that, humbled and  
mortified, I was glad to seeke my  
Chamber.

“ “ “ “ Entering the Dining-  
room, however, I uttered a Shriek  
on seeing *Father* fallen back in his  
Chair, as though in a Fit, like unto  
that which terrified us a Year ago;  
and *Mother* hearing me call out, ran  
in, loosed his Collar, and soone  
broughte him to himselfe, tho’ not  
without much Alarm to alle. He  
made

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made light of it himselfe, and sayd 'twas merelie a suddain Rush of Blood to the Head, and woulde not be dissuaded from going out; but *Mother* was playnly smote at the Heart, and having lookt after him with some anxietie, exclaimed, "I shall neither meddle nor make more in this Businesse: your *Father's* suddain Seizures shall never be layd at my Doore;" and soe left me, till we met at Dinner. After the Cloth was drawne, enters *Mr. Milton*, who goes up to *Mother*, and with Gracefulnesse kisses her Hand; but she withdrewe it pettishly, and tooke up her Sewing, on the which he lookt at her wonderingly, and then at me; then at her agayne, as though he woulde reade her whole Character in her Face; which having seemed to doe, and to write the same in some private Page of

of his Heart, he never troubled her or himself with further Comment, but tooke up Matters just where he had left them last. Ere we parted we had some private Conference touching our Marriage, for hastening which he had soe much to say that I coulde not long contend with him, especiallie as I founde he had plainlie made out that *Mother* loved him not.

House full of Companie, leaving mee Time to write nor think. *Mother* sayth, tho' she cannot forbode an happie Marriage, she will provide for a merrie Wedding, and hath growne more than commonlie tender to me, and given me some Trinkets, a Piece of fine *Holland* Cloth, and enough of green Satin for a Gown, that will stand on End with its owne Richesse. She hath me constantlie  
with

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with her in the Kitchen, Pastric, and Store-room, telling me 'tis needfull I shoulde improve in Housewiferie, seeing I shall soe soone have a Home of my owne.

But I think *Mother* knows not, and I am afeard to tell her, that *Mr. Milton* hath no House of his owne to carry me to, but onlie Lodgings, which have well suited his Bachelor State, but may not, 'tis likelie, beseeme a Lady to live in. He deems so himself, and sayeth we will look out for an hired House together, at our Leisure. Alle this he hath sayd to me in an Undertone, in *Mother's* Presence, she sewing at the Table and we sitting in the Window; and 'tis difficult to tell how much she hears, for she will aske no Questions, and make noe Comments, onlie compresses her Lips, which makes me think she knows.

The



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And then craved my Pardon for soe unmannerly a Rhyme, which indeede, methoughte, needed an Excuse, but exprest a Feare that I knew not (what she called) my high Destiny, and prayed me not to trifle with Mr. *Milton's* Feelings nor in his Sichte, as I had done the Daye she dined at *Forest Hill*. I laught, and sayd, he must take me as he found me: he was going to marry *Mary Powell*, not the *Wife Widow of Tekoab*. *Rose* lookt wistfullie, but I bade her take Heart, for I doubted not we shoulde content eache the other; and for the Rest, her Advice shoulde not be forgotten. Thereat, she was pacified.

May 22d

Alle Bustle and Confusion,—slaying of Poultrie, making of Pastric, etc. People coming and going, prest to dine and to sup, and refuse, and then



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and eternall Spring, and cternall Blisse, and much that I cannot call to Mind, and other-much that I coulde not cõprehende, but which was in mine ears as the Song of Birds, or Falling of Waters.

May 23d.

*Rose* hath come, and hath kindlic offered to help pack the Trunks, (which are to be sent off by the Waggon to *London*;) that I may have the more Time to devote to *Mr. Milton*. Nay, but he will soon have all my Time devoted to himself, and I would as lief spend what little remains in mine accustomed Haunts, after mine accustomed Fashion. I had purposed a Ride on *Clover* this Morning, with *Robin*; but the poor Boy must I trow be disappointed.

—And for what? Oh me!  
I have hearde such a long Sermon  
on



1643

London,  
Mr. Russell's, Taylor,  
Bride's Churchyard.

Oh Heaven ! is this my new  
Home ? my Heart sinkes already.  
After the swete fresh Ayre of *Sheepscote*,  
and the Cleanliness, and the  
Quiet and the pleasant Smells,  
Sightes, and Soundes, alle whereof  
Mr. *Milton* enjoyed to the Full as  
keenlie as I, saying they minded  
him of *Paradise*,—how woulde *Rose*  
pitie me, could she view me in this  
close Chamber, the Floor whereof  
of dark, uneven Boards, must have  
beene layd, methinks, three hundred  
Years ago ; the oaken Pannells,  
utterlie destitute of Polish and with  
sundrie Chinks ; the Bed with dull  
brown Hangings, lined with as dull  
a greene, occupying Half the Space ;  
and



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such a Home as this? I will not think. Soe this is *London*! How diverse from the "towred Citie" of my Husband's versingl and of his Prose too; for as he spake, by the way, of the Disorders of our Time, which extend even into eache domestiek Circle, he sayd that alle must, for a While, appear confused to our imperfect View, just as a mightie Citie unto a Stranger who shoulde beholde around him huge, unfinished Fabrics, the Plan whereof he could but imperfectlie make out, amid the Builders' disorderlie Apparatus; but that, *from afar*, we mighte perceeve glorious Results from party Contentions, — Freedom springing up from Oppression, Intelligence succeeding Ignorance, Order following Disorder, just as that same Traveller looking at the Citie from a distant Height, should beholde



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my Husband's Voice, and another with it.

Thursday

'Twas a Mr. *Lawrence* whom my Husband brought Home last Night to sup; and the Evening passed righte pleasantlie, with News, Jestes, and a little Musicke. Todaye hath been kindlie devoted by Mr. *Milton* to shewing me Sights:—and oh! the strange, diverting Cries in the Streets, even from earlie Dawn! “New Milk and Curds from the Dairie!”—“Olde Shoes for some Brooms!”—“Anie Kitchen-stuffe, have you, Maids?”—“Come buy my greene Herbes!”—and then in the Streets, here a Man preaching, there another juggling: here a Boy with an Ape, there a Show of *Nineveh*: next the News from the North; and as for the China Shops and Drapers in the *Strand*, and the Cook's



1643

Boat, he volunteered to goe with us on the River. After manie Hours' Exercise, I have come Home fatigued, yet well pleased. Mr. *Marvell* sups with us.

Friday.

I wish I could note down a Tithe of the pleasant Things that were sayd last Nighte. First, olde Mr. *Milton* having stept out with his Son,—I called in *Rachael*, the younger of Mr. *Ruffel's* Serving-maids, (for we have none of our owne as yet, which tends to much Discomfiture,) and, with her Aide, I dusted the Bookes and sett them up in half the Space they had occupied; then cleared away three large Basketfuls, of the absoluteſt Rubbish, torn Letters and the like, and sent out for Flowers, (which it seemeth strange enoughe to me to *buy*,) which gave the Chamber a gayer Aire, and soe my Husband



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tising Archery and other manlie Exercifes.

Saturday.

Tho' we rife betimes, olde Mr. *Milton* is earlier stille; and I always find him fitting at his Table beside the Window (by Reason of the Chamber being soe dark,) sorting I know not how manie Bundles of Papers tied with red Tape; each so like the other that I marvel how he knows them aparte. This Morning, I found the poore old Gentleman in sad Distress at missing a Manuscript Song of Mr. *Henry Lawes*', the onlie Copy extant, which he perswaded himselfe that I must have sent down to the Kitchen Fire Yesterday. I am convinced I dismist not a single Paper that was not torne each Way, as being utterlie uselesse; but as the unluekie Song cannot be founde, he sighs and

and is certayn of my Delinquence, as is *Hubert*, his owne Man; or, as he more frequentlie calls him, his “odd Man;”—and an odd Man indeede is Mr. *Hubert*, readie to addrefs his Master or Master’s Sonne on the merest Occasion, without waiting to be spoken to; tho’ he expecteth Others to treat them with far more Deference than he himself payeth.

—Dead tired, this Daye, with so much Exercife; but woulde not say soe, because my Husband was thinking to please me by shewing me soe much. Spiritts flagging however. These *London* Streets wearie my Feet. We have been over the House in *Aldersgate Street*, the Garden whereof disappointed me, having hearde soe much of it; but ’tis far better than none, and the House is large enough  
for

1643.

for Mr. *Milton's* Familie and my *Father's* to boote. Thought how pleasant 'twould be to have them alle aboute me next *Christmasse*; but that holie Time is noe longer kept with Joyfullnesse in *London*. Ventured, therefore, to expresse a Hope, we mighte spend it at *Forest Hill*; but Mr. *Milton* sayd 'twas unlikelie he should be able to leave Home; and askt, would I go alone? — Constrained, for Shame, to say no; but felt, in my Heart, I woulde jump to see *Forest Hill* on anie Terms, I soe love alle that dwell there.

Sunday  
Even.

Private and publick Prayer, Sermons, and Psalm-singing from Morn until Nighte. The onlie Break hath been a Visit to a quaint but pleasing Lady, by Name *Catherine Thorsen*, whome my Husband holds in great  
Reverence.

of Mary Powell.

Reverence. She said manie Things worthy to be remembered; onlie as I remember them, I need not to write them down. Sorrie to be caughte napping by my Husband, in the Midst of the third long Sermon. This comes of over-walking, and of being unable to sleep o' Nights; for whether it be the *London* Ayre, or the *London* Methods of making the Beds, or the strange Noises in the Streets, I know not, but I have scarce beene able to close my Eyes before Daybreak since I came to Town.

And now beginneth a new Life; for my Husband's Pupils, who were dismist for a Time for my Sake, returne to theire Tasks this Daye, and olde Mr. *Milton* giveth place to his two Grandsons, his widowed  
Daughter's

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Daughter's Children, *Edward* and *John Phillips*, whom my Husband led in to me just now. Two plainer Boys I never sett Eyes on; the one weak-eyed and puny, the other prim and puritanicall—no more to be compared to our sweet *Robin*! \* \* \*

After a few Words, they retired to their Books; and my Husband, taking my Hand, sayd in his kindest Manner,—“And now I leave  
 “my sweete *Moll* to the pleasant  
 “Companie of her own goode and  
 “innocent Thoughtes; and, if she  
 “needs more, here are both stringed  
 “and keyed Instruments, and Books  
 “both of the older and modern  
 “Time, soe that she will not find  
 “the Hours hang heavie.” Methoughte how much more I should like a Ride upon *Clover* than all the Books that ever were penned; for the Door no sooner closed upon  
 Mr.

Mr. *Milton* than it seemed as tho' he had taken alle the Sunshine with him; and I fell to cleaning the Casement that I mighte look out the better into the Churchyarde, and then altered Tables and Chairs, and then fate downe with my Elbows resting on the Window-seat, and my Chin on the Palms of my Hands, gazing on I knew not what, and feeling like a Butterflie under a Wine-glass.

I marvelled why it seemed soe long since I was married, and wondered what they were doing at Home,—coulede fancy I hearde *Mother* chiding, and see *Charlie* stealing into the Dairie and dipping his Finger in the Cream, and *Kate* feeding the Chickens, and *Dick* taking a Stone out of *Whitestar's* Shoe.

—Methought how dull it was to be passing the best Part of the  
Summer

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Summer out of the Reache of fresh Ayre and greene Fields, and wondered, would alle my future Summers be soe spent?

. Thoughte how dull it was to live in Lodgings, where one could not even go into the Kitchen to make a Pudding; and how dull to live in a Town, without some young female Friend with whom one might have ventured into the Streets, and where one could not soe much as feed Colts in a Paddock; how dull to be without a Garden, unable soe much as to gather a Handfulle of ripe Cherries; and how dull to looke into a Church-yarde, where there was a Man digging a Grave!

—When I wearied of staring at the Grave-digger, I gazed at an olde Gentleman and a young Lady slowlie walking along, yet scarce as if

of Mary Powell.

if I noted them ; and was thinking mostlie of *Forest Hill*, when I saw them stop at our Doore, and presently they were shewn in, by the Name of Doctor and Mistres *Davies*. I sent for my Husband, and entertayned 'em bothe as well as I could, till he appeared, and they were polite and pleasant to me ; the young Lady tall and slender, of a cleare brown Skin, and with Eyes that were fine enough ; onlie there was a supprest Smile on her Lips alle the Time, as tho' she had seen me looking out of the Window. She tried me on all Subjects, I think ; for she started them more adroitlie than I ; and taking up a Book on the Window-seat, which was the *Amadigi* of *Bernardo Tasso*, printed alle in *Italiques*, she sayd, if I loved Poetry, which she was sure I must, she knew she shoulde love me. I

did

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did not tell her whether or noe. Then we were both silent. Then Doctor *Davies* talked vehementlie to Mr. *Milton* agaynst the King; and Mr. *Milton* was not so contrarie to him as I could have wished. Then Mistres *Davies* tooke the Word from her Father and beganne to talke to Mr. *Milton* of *Tasso*, and *Dante*, and *Boiardo*, and *Ariosto*; and then Doctor *Davies* and I were silent. Methoughte, they both talked well, tho' I knew so little of their Subject-matter; onlie they complimented eache other too much. I mean not they were insincere, for eache seemed to think highlie of the other; onlie we neede not say alle we seele.

To conclude, we are to sup with them to-morrow.

Wednesday.

*Journall*, I have Nobodie now but you, to whome to tell my little Griefs;

Griefs; indeede, before I married, I know not that I had anie; and even now, they are very small, onlie they are soe new, that sometimes my Heart is like to burst.

—I know not whether 'tis safe to put them alle on Paper, onlie it relieves for the Time, and it kills Time, and perhaps, a little While hence I may looke back and see how small they were, and how they mighte have beene shunned, or better borne. 'Tis worth the Triall.

—Yesterday Morn, for very Wearinesse, I looked alle over my Linen and Mr. *Milton's*, to see could I finde anie Thing to mend; but there was not a Stitch amiss. I woulde have played on the Spinnette, but was afraid he should hear my indifferent Musick. Then, as a last Resource, I tooke a Book—*Paul Perrin's Historie of the Waldenses*;—

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*denfes*;—and was, I believe, dozing a little, when I was aware of a continuall Whispering and Crying. I thought 'twas some Child in the Street; and, having some Comfits in my Pocket, I slept softlie out to the House-door and lookt forth, but no Child could I see. Coming back, the Door of my Husband's Studdy being ajar, I was avised to look in; and saw him, with awfulle Brow, raising his Hand in the very Act to strike the youngest *Phillips*. I could never endure to see a Child struck, soe hastilie cryed out, "Oh, don't!"—whereon he rose, and, as if not seeing me, gently closed the Door, and, before I reached my Chamber, I hearde soe loud a Crying that I began to cry too. Soon, alle was quiet; and my Husband, coming in, slept gently up to me, and putting his Arm about my Neck, sayd,  
"My

of Mary Powell.

“ My dearest Life, never agayn, I  
“ beseech you, interfere between  
“ me and the Boys: ’tis as un-  
“ seemlie as tho’ I shoulde interfere  
“ between you and your Maids,—  
“ when you have any,—and will  
“ weaken my Hands, dear *Moll*,  
“ more than you have anie Sus-  
“ picion of.”

I replied, kissing that same of-  
fending Member as I spoke, “ Poor  
“ *Jack* would have beene glad, just  
“ now, if I *had* weakened them.”—  
“ But that is not the Question,” he  
returned, “ for we should alle be  
“ glad to escape necessary Punish-  
“ ment; whereas, it is the Power,  
“ not the Penalty of our bad Habits,  
“ that we shoulde seek to be de-  
“ livered from.”—“ There may,”  
I sayd, “ be necessary, but need not  
“ be corporal Punishment.” “ That  
“ is as may be,” returned he, “ and  
“ hath

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"hath alreadie been settled by an  
 "Authoritie to which I submit, and  
 "partlie think you will dispute,  
 "and that is, the Word of God.  
 "Pain of Body is in Realitie, or  
 "ought to be, sooner over and more  
 "safelie borne than Pain of an in-  
 "genuous Mind; and, as to the  
 "Shame,—why, as *Lorenzo de' Me-*  
 "*dici* sayd to *Soccini*, 'The Shame  
 "' is in the Offence rather than in  
 "' the Punishment.' "

I replied, "Our *Robin* had never  
 "beene beaten for his Studdies;"  
 to which he sayd with a Smile,  
 that even I must admit *Robin* to  
 be noe greate Scholar. And so in  
 good Humour left me; but I was  
 in no good Humour, and hoped  
 Heaven might never make me the  
 Mother of a Son, for if I should  
 see Mr. *Milton* strike him, I should  
 learn to hate the Father.—

Learning

Learning there was like to be Companie at Doctor *Davies*'s, I was avised to put on my brave greene Satin Gown; and my Husband sayd it became me well, and that I onlie needed some Primroses and Cowslips in my Lap, to look like *May*;—and somewhat he added about mine Eyes' "clear shining after Rain," which avised me he had perceived I had beene crying in the Morning, which I had hoped he had not.

Arriving at the Doctor's House, we were shewn into an emptie Chamber; at least, emptie of Companie, but full of every Thing else; for there were Books, and Globes, and stringed and wind Instruments, and stuffed Birds and Beasts, and Things I know not soe much as the Names of, besides an Easel with a Painting by Mrs. *Mildred* on it, which she meant to be seene, or she would

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woulde have put it away. Subject, "*Brutus's Judgment*:" which I thought a strange, unfeeling one for a Woman; and did not wish to be *her* Son. Soone she came in, drest with studded and puritanicall Plainnesse; in brown Taffeta, guarded with black Velvet, which became her well enough, but was scarce suited for the Season. She had much to say about limning, in which my Husband could follow her better than I; and then they went to the Globes, and *Copernicus*, and *Galileo Galilei*, whom she called a Martyr, but I do not. For, is a Martyr one who is unwillinglie imprisoned, or who formally recants? even tho' he affected afterwards to say 'twas *but* a Form, and cries, "*Eppure, si muove?*" The earlier Christians might have sayd 'twas but a Form to burn a Handfull of Incense

Incense before *Jove's* Statua; *Pliny* would have let them goe.

Afterwards, when the Doctor came in and engaged my Husband in Discourse, Mistres *Mildred* devoted herselfe to me, and askt what Progresse I had made with *Bernardo Tasso*. I tolde her, none at alle, for I was equallie faultie at *Italiques* and *Italian*, and onlie knew his best Work thro' Mr. *Fairfax's* Translation; whereat she fell laughing, and sayd she begged my Forgiveness, but I was confounding the Father with the Sonne; then laught agayn, but pretended 'twas not at me but at a Lady I minded her of, who never coulde remember to distinguish betwixt *Lionardo da Vinci* and *Lorenzo dei Medici*. That last Name brought up the Recollection of my Morning's Debate with my Husband, which made me feel sad;  
and

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and then, Mrs. *Mildred*, seeming anxious to make me forget her Unmannerliness, commenced, "Can you paint?"—"Can you sing?"—"Can you play the Lute?"—and, at the last, "What *can* you do?" I might have sayd I could comb out my Curls smother than she could hers, but did not. Other Guests came in, and talked so much agaynst Prelacy and the Right divine of Kings that I would fain we had remained at Astronomie and Poetry. For Supper there was little Meat, and noe strong Drinks, onlie a thinnish foreign Wine, with Cakes, Candies, Sweetmeats, Fruits, and Confections. Such, I suppose, is Town Fashion. At the laste, came Musick; Mistresse *Mildred* sang and played; then prest me to do the like, but I was soe fearfulle, I could not; so my Husband sayd  
he

he woulde play for me, and that woulde be alle one, and soe covered my Bashfullenesse handsomlie.

Onlie this Morning, just before going to his Studdy, he stept back and sayd, “ Sweet *Moll*, I know you  
“ can both play and sing—why will  
“ you not practise?” I replyed, I loved it not much. He rejoyned,  
“ But you know I love it, and is  
“ not that a Motive?” I sayd, I feared to let him hear me, I played so ill. He replyed, “ Why, that is  
“ the very Reason you shoulde seek  
“ to play better, and I am sure you  
“ have Plenty of Time. Perhaps,  
“ in your whole future Life, you  
“ will not have such a Season  
“ of Leisure as you have now,—  
“ a golden Opportunity, which you  
“ will surely seize.”—Then added,  
“ Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife learnt to  
“ play the Lute, solely that she  
“ mighte

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“mighte please her Husband.” I answered, “Nay, what to tell me “of Sir *Thomas More’s* Wife, or of “*Hugh Grotius’s* Wife, when I was “the Wife of *John Milton*?” He looked at me twice, and quicklie, too, at this Saying; then laughing, cried, “You cleaving Mischief! I “hardlie know whether to take that “Speech amisse or well—however, “you shall have the Benefit of the “Doubt.”

And so away laughing; and I, for very Shame, sat down to the Spinnette for two wearie Hours, till foe tired, I coulde cry; and when I desisted, coulde hear *Jack* wailing over his Task. ’Tis raining fast, I cannot get out, nor should I dare to go alone, nor where to go to if ’twere fine. I fancy ill Smells from the Churchyard—’tis long to Dinner-time, with noe Change, noe Exercise;



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Manner, "If Mr. *Powell* has a good "Library." For this Piece of Hypocrisie, at which I heartilie laught, he was commended by his Uncle. Hypocrisie it was, for Master *Ned* cryeth over his Taskes pretty nearlie as oft as the youngest.

Friday

To rewarde my zealous Practise to-day on the Spinnette, Mr. *Milton* produced a Collection of "*Ayres, and Dialogues, for one, two, and three Voices,*" by his Friend, Mr. *Harry Lawes*, which he sayd I shoulde find very pleasant Studdy; and then he told me alle about their getting up the Masque of *Comus* in *Ludlow Castle*, and how well the Lady's Song was sung by Mr. *Lawes*' Pupil, the Lady *Alice*, then a sweet, modest Girl, onlie thirteen Yeares of Age,—and he told me of the Singing of a faire *Italian* young Signora, named  
*Leonora*



1643

“ On a Daye, there was a certain  
 “ Child wandered forthe, that would  
 “ play. He met a Bee, and sayd,  
 “ ‘Bee, wilt thou play with me?’  
 “ The Bee sayd, ‘No, I have my  
 “ Duties to perform, tho’ you, it  
 “ woulde seeme, have none. I  
 “ must away to make Honey.’  
 “ Then the Childe, abasht, went  
 “ to the Ant. He sayd, ‘Will you  
 “ play with me, Ant?’ The Ant  
 “ replied, ‘Nay, I must provide  
 “ against the Winter.’ In shorte,  
 “ he found that everie Bird, Beaste,  
 “ and Insect he accosted, had a closer  
 “ Eye to the Purpose of their Cre-  
 “ ation than himfelfe. Then he  
 “ sayd, ‘I will then back, and con-  
 “ my Task.’—*Moral.* The Moral  
 “ of the foregoing Fable, my deare  
 “ Aunt, is this—We must love Work  
 “ better than Play.”

With alle my Interest for Chil-  
 dren,



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hearde good News. He sayd, yes: that some Friends had long beene perswading him, against his Will, to make publick some of his *Latin* Poems; and that, having at length consented to theire Wishes, he had beene with *Mosley* the Publisher in *St. Paul's Churchyard*, who agreed to print them. I sayd, I was sorrie I shoulde be unable to read them. He sayd he was sorry too; he must translate them for me. I thanked him, but observed that Traductions were never soe good as Originalls. He rejoyned, "Nor am I even a good Translator." I askt, "Why not write in your owne Tongue?" He sayd, "*Latin* is understood all over the Worlde." I sayd, "But there are manie in your owne Country do not understand it." He was silent soe long upon that, that I supposed he did not mean



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“ Nor is an Undertaking that shall  
 “ be one of high Duty, to be en-  
 “ tered upon without Prayer and  
 “ Discipline :—it woulde be Pre-  
 “ sumption indeede, to commence  
 “ an Enterprife which I meant  
 “ shoulde delighte and profit every  
 “ instructed and elevated Mind with-  
 “ out so much Paynes-takinge as it  
 “ should cost a poor Mountebank to  
 “ balance a Pole on his Chin.”

Sunday  
 Even.

In the Clouds agayn. At Dinner, to-daye, Mr. *Milton* catechised the Boys on the Morning's Sermon, the Heads of which, though amounting to a Dozen, *Ned* tolde off roundlie. Roguish little *Jack* looked slylie at me, says, “ *Aunt* coulde not tell off the Sermon.” “ Why not ? ” says his Uncle. “ Because she was sleep-  
 “ ing,” says *Jack*. Provoked with the Child, I turned scarlett, and  
 hastilie



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 hassilie

haftilie fayd, "I was not." No-  
bodie fpoke; but I repented the  
Falſitie the Moment it had eſcaped  
me; and there was *Ned*, a folding  
of his Hands, drawing down his  
Mouth, and cloſing his Eyes . . . . .  
My Huſband tooke me to taſke for  
it when we were alone, ſoe tenderlie  
that I wept.

*Jack* ſayd this Morning, "I know  
" Something—I know *Aunt* keeps  
" a Journall." "And a good Thing  
" if you kept one too, *Jack*," ſayd  
his Uncle, "it would ſhew you how  
" little you doe." *Jack* was ſilenced;  
but *Ned*, purſing up his Mouth,  
ſays, "I can't think what *Aunt* can  
" have to put in a Journall—ſhould  
" not you like, *Uncle*, to ſee?"  
"No, *Ned*," ſays his Uncle, "I am  
" upon Honour, and your dear Aunt's  
" Journall is as ſafe, for me, as the  
golden

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“ golden Bracelets that King *Alfred*  
 “ hung upon the High-way. I am  
 “ glad she has such a Resource, and,  
 “ as we know she cannot have much  
 “ News to put in it, we may the  
 “ more safely rely that it is a Treas-  
 “ ure of sweet, and high, and holy,  
 “ and profitable Thoughtes.”

Oh, how deeplie I blusht at this  
 ill-deserved Prayse! How sorrie  
 I was that I had ever registered  
 aught that he woulde grieve to  
 read! I secretly resolved that, this  
 Daye's Journalling should be the  
 last, untill I had attained a better  
 Frame of Mind.

Saturday  
 Even

I have kept Silence, yea, even  
 from good Words, but it has beene  
 a Payn and Griefe unto me. Good  
 Mistresse *Catherine Thompson* called  
 on me a few Dayes back, and spoke  
 so wisely and so wholesomelic con-  
 cerning

cerning my Lot, and the Way to make it happy, (she is the first that hath spoken as if 'twere possible it mighte not be soe already,) that I felt for a Season quite heartened; but it has alle faded away. Because the Source of Cheerfulnesse is not *in* me, anie more than in a dull Land-skip, which the Sun lighteneth for awhile, and when he has set, its Beauty is gone.

Oh me! how merry I was at Home!—The Source of Cheerfulnesse seemed in me *then*, and why is it not *now*? Partly because alle that I was there taught to think right is here thought wrong; because much that I there thought harmlesse is here thought sinfull; because I cannot get at anie of the Things that employed and interested me *there*, and because the Things within my Reach *here* do not interest me.

Then,

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Then, 'tis no small Thing to be continuallie deemed ignorant and misinformed, and to have one's Errors continuallie covered, however handsomelie, even before Children. To say nothing of the Weight upon the Spiritts at firste, from Change of Ayre, and Diet, and Scene, and Loss of habituall Exercise and Companie and householde Cares. These petty Grieffs try me sorelie; and when Cousin *Ralph* came in unexpectedlie this Morn, tho' I never much cared for him at Home, yet the Sichte of *Rose's* Brother, fresh from *Sheepscote* and *Oxford* and *Forest Hill*, soe upset me that I sank into Tears. No Wonder that Mr. *Milten*, then coming in, shoulde hastilie enquire if *Ralph* had brought ill Tidings from Home; and, finding alle was well there, shoulde look strangelie. He askt *Ralph*, however,

to stay to Dinner ; and we had much Talk of Home ; but now, I regret having omitted to ask a thousand Questions.

Mr. *Milton* in his Closet and I in my Chamber.—For the first Time he seems this Evening to have found out how dissimilar are our Minds. Meaning to please him, I sayd, “ I  
“ kept awake bravelie, to-nighte,  
“ through that long, long Sermon,  
“ for your Sake.”—“ And why not  
“ for *God's* Sake ?” cried he, “ why  
“ not for your owne Sake ?—Oh,  
“ sweet *Wife*, I fear you have yet  
“ much to learn of the Depth of  
“ Happiness that is comprised in  
“ the Communion between a for-  
“ given Soul and its Creator. It  
“ hallows the most secular as well  
“ as the most spirituall Employ-  
“ ments ; it gives Pleasure that has  
no

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“ no after Bitternesse ; it gives Plea-  
 “ sure to *God*—and oh ! thinke of  
 “ the Depth of Meaning in those  
 “ Words ! think what it is for us  
 “ to be capable of giving *God* Plea-  
 “ sure ! ”

—Much more, in the same Vein !  
 to which I could not, with equal  
 Power, respond ; soe, he away to  
 his Studdy, to pray perhaps for my  
 Change of Heart, and I to my  
 Bed.

Aug 21,  
 Saturday

Oh Heaven ! can it be possible ?  
 am I agayn at *Forest Hill* ? How  
 strange, how joyfull an Event, tho'  
 brought about with Teares !—Can  
 it be, that it is onlie a Month since  
 I stode at this Toilette as a Bride ?  
 and lay awake on that Bed, thinking  
 of *London* ? How long a Month !  
 and oh ! this present one will be alle  
 tooq short.

of Mary Powell.

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It seemeth that *Ralph Hewlett*, shocked at my Teares and the Alteration in my Looks, broughte back a dismall Report of me to deare *Father* and *Mother*, pronouncing me either ill or unhappie. Thereupon, *Richard*, with his usuall Impetuositie, prevayled on *Father* to let him and *Ralph* fetch me Home for a While, at leaste till after *Michaelmasse*.

How surprised was I to see *Dick* enter! My Arms were soe fast about his Neck, and my Face prest soe close to his Shoulder, that I did not for a While perceive the grave Looke he had put on. At the last, I was avised to ask what broughte him soe unexpectedlie to *London*; and then he hemmed and looked at *Ralph*, and *Ralph* looked at *Dick*, and then *Dick* sayd bluntly, he hoped *Mr. Milton* woulde spare me to go Home

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Home till after *Michaelmasse*, and *Father* had sent him on Purpose to say soe. *Mr. Milton* lookt surpris'd and hurte, and sayd, how could he be expected to part soe soone with me, a Month's Bride? it must be some other Time: he had intended to take me himselfe to *Forest Hill* the following Spring, but could not spare Time now, nor liked me to goe without him, nor thought I should like it myself. But my Eyes said *I shoulde*, and then he gazed earnestlie at me and lookt hurt; and there was a dead Silence. Then *Dick*, hesitating a little, sayd he was sorrie to tell us my *Father* was ill; on which I clasped my Hands and beganne to weepe; and *Mr. Milton*, changing Countenance, askt fundrie Questions, which *Dick* answered well enough; and then said he woulde not be soe cruel as to

of Mary Powell.

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to keepe me from a Father I foe dearlie loved, if he were sick, though he liked not my travelling in such unfettled Times with so young a Convoy. *Ralph* sayd they had brought *Diggory* with them, who was olde and steddy enough, and had ridden my *Mother's* Mare for my Use; and *Dick* was for our getting forward a Stage on our Journey the same Evening, but Mr. *Milton* infisted on our abiding till the following Morn, and woulde not be overruled. And gave me leave to stay a Month, and gave me Money, and many kind Words, which I coulde mark little, being foe overtaken with Concern about dear *Father*, whose Illness I feared to be worse than *Dick* sayd, seeing he seemed foe close and dealt in dark Speeches and Parables. After Dinner, they went forth, they sayd,  
to

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to look after the Horses, but I think to see *London*, and returned not till Supper.

We got them Beds in a House hard by, and started at earlie Dawn.

Mr. *Milton* kissed me most tenderlie agayn and agayn at parting, as though he feared to lose me; but it had seemed to me soe hard to brook the Delay of even a few Hours when *Father*, in his Sicknesse, was wanting me, that I took leave of my Husband with lesse Affection than I mighte have shewn, and onlie began to find my Spiritts lighten when we were fairly quit of *London*, with its vile Sewers and Drains, and to breathe the sweete, pure Morning Ayre, as we rode swiftlie along. *Dick* called *London* a vile Place, and spake to *Ralph* concerning what they had seene of it overnichte, whence it appeared to me, that he had  
beene

beene pleasure-seeking more than, in *Father's* state, he ought to have beene. But *Dick* was always a reckless Lad;—and oh, what Joy, on reaching this deare Place, to find *Father* had onlie beene suffering under one of his usual Stomach Attacks, which have no Danger in them, and which *Dick* had exaggerated, fearing Mr. *Milton* would not otherwise part with me;—I was a little shocked, and coulde not help scolding him, though I was the gainer; but he boldlie defended what he called his “Stratagem of War,” saying it was quite allowable in dealing with a *Puritan*.

As for *Robin*, he was wild with Joy when I arrived; and hath never ceased to hang about me. The other Children are riotous in their Mirth. Little *Joscelyn* hath returned from his Foster-mother's Farm, and  
is

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is noe longer a puny Child—'tis thought he will thrive. I have him constantly in my Arms or riding on my Shoulder; and with Delight have revisited alle my olde Haunts, patted *Clover*, &c. Deare *Mother* is most kind. The Maids as oft call me Mrs. *Molly* as Mrs. *Milton*, and then smile, and beg Pardon. *Rose* and *Agnew* have been here, and have made me promise to visit *Sheepscote* before I return to *London*. The whole House seems full of Glee.

Monday.

It seemes quite strange to heare *Dick* and *Harry* singing loyal Songs and drinking the *King's* Health after soe recentlie hearing his M. soe continuallie spoken agaynst. Also, to see a Lad of *Robin's* Age, coming in and out at his Will, doing anie-thing or nothing; instead of being  
ever

of Mary Powell.

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ever at his Taskes, and looking at Meal-times as if he were repeating them to himselfe. I know which I like best.

A most kind Letter from Mr. *Milton*, hoping *Father* is better, and praying for News of him. How can I write to him without betraying *Dick*? *Robin* and I rode, this Morning, to *Sheepscote*. Thoughte Mr. *Agnew* received me with unwonted Gravitie. He tolde me he had received a Letter from my Husband, praying News of my Father, seeing I had sent him none, and that he had writ to him that *Father* was quite well, never had been better. Then he sayd to me he feared Mr. *Milton* was labouring under some false Impression. I tolde him trulie, that *Dick*, to get me Home, had exaggerated a trifling Illness of *Father's*, but that I was guiltlesse

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mere Child neither, nor a runaway Wife, nor in such bad Companie, in mine own Father's House, where he firste saw me; and, was it anie Fault of mine, indeed, that *Father* was not ill? or can I wish he had beene? No, truly!

This Letter hath sorelie vexed me. Dear *Father*, seeing me soe dulle, askt me if I had had bad News. I sayd I had, for that Mr. *Milton* wanted me back at the Month's End. He sayd, lightlie, Oh, that must not be, I must at all Events stay over his Birthdaye, he could not spare me sooner; he woulde settle all that. Let it be soe then—I am content enoughe.

To change the Current of my Thoughts, he hath renewed the Scheme for our Visit to Lady *Falkland*, which, Weather permitting, is to take Place to-morrow. 'Tis long

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long since I have seene her, for I am willing to goe; but she is dearer to *Rose* than to me, though I respect her much.

The whole of Yesterday occupyde with our Visit. I love Lady *Falkland* well, yet her religious Mellanchollie and Presages of Evil have left a Weight upon my Spiritts. To-daye, we have a Family Dinner. The *Agnews* come not, but the *Merediths* doe, we shall have more Mirthe if less Wit. My Time now draweth soe short, I must crowd into it alle the Pleasure I can; and in this, everie one conspires to help me, saying, "Poor *Moll* must soon "return to *London*." Never was Creature soe petted or spoylt. How was it there was none of this before I married, when they might have me alwaies? ah, therein lies the  
Secret.

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Secret. Now, we have mutuallie tasted our Losse.

*Ralph Hewlett*, going agayn to Town, was avised to ask whether I had anie Commission wherewith to charge him. I bade him tell *Mr. Milton* that since we should meet soe soone, I need not write, but would keep alle my News for our Fire-side. *Robin* added, "Say, "we cannot spare her yet," and *Father* echoed the same.

But I begin to feel now, that I must not prolong my Stay. At the leaste, not beyond *Father's* Birthday. My Month is hasting to a Close.

Sept. 21

Battle at *Newbury*—Lord *Falkland* slayn. Oh, fatal Loss! *Father* and *Mother* going off to my Lady: but I think she will not see them. Aunt and Uncle *Hewlett*, who brought the News, can talk of nothing else.  
Alle

of Mary Powell.

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Alle Sadnesse and Confternation. I am wearie of bad News, public and private, and feel less and less Love for the Puritans, yet am forced to seem more loyal than I really am, for high runs party Feeling just now at Home.

My Month has passed!

A most displeased Letter from my Husband, minding me that my Leave of Absence hath expired, and that he likes not the Messages he received through *Ralph*, nor the unreasonable and hurtful Pass-times which he finds have been making my quiet Home distasteful. Asking, are they suitable, under Circumstances of national Confternation to *my owne* Party, or seemlie in for young a Wife, apart from her Husband? To conclude, insisting, with more Authoritie than  
Kindnesse,

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Kindnesse, on my immediate Return.

With Tears in my Eyes, I have beene to my Father. I have toldé him I must goe. He sayth, Oh no, not yet. I persisted, I must, my Husband was soe very angry. He rejoined, What, angry with my sweet *Moll*? and for spending a few Days with her old Father? Can it be? hath it come to this already? I sayd, my Month had expired. He sayd, Nonsense, he had always askt me to stay over *Michaelmasse*, till his Birthday; he knew *Dick* had named it to Mr. *Milton*. I sayd, Mr. *Milton* had taken no Notice thereof, but had onlie granted me a Month. He grew peevish, and said, "Pooh, "pooh!" Thereat, after a Silence of a Minute or two, I sayd yet agayn, I must goe. He took me by the two Wrists and sayd, Doe you wish to

of Mary Powell.

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to go? I burst into Teares, but made noe Answer. He sayd, That is Answer enough,—how doth this Puritan carry it with you, my Child? and snatched his Letter. I sayd, Oh, don't read that, and would have drawn it back; but *Father*, when heated, is impossible to controul; therefore, quite deaf to Entreaty, he would read the Letter, which was unfit for him in his chafed Mood; then, holding it at Arm's Length, and smiting it with his Fist,—Ha! and is it thus he dares address a Daughter of mine? (with Words added, I dare not write)—but be quiet, *Moll*, be at Peace, my Child, for he shall not have you back for awhile, even though he come to fetch you himself. The maddest Thing I ever did was to give you to this Roundhead. He and *Roger Agnew* talked me over with soe many  
fine

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fine Words.—What possessed me, I know not. Your Mother always said evil would come of it. But as long as thy Father has a Roof over his Head, Child, thou hast a Home.

As soone as he would hear me, I begged him not to take on soe, for that I was not an unhappy Wife; but my Tears, he sayd, belied me; and indeed, with Fear and Agitation, they flowed fast enough. But I sayd, I *must* goe home, and wished I had gone sooner, and would he let *Diggory* take me! No, he sayd, not a Man Jack on his Land shoulde saddle a Horse for me, nor would he lend me one, to carry me back to Mr. *Milton*; at the leaste not for a While, till he had come to Reason, and protested he was sorry for having writ to me soe harshly.

“Soe be content, *Moll*, and make  
“not two *Enemies* instead of one.

“Goe,

of *Mary Powell.*

“Goe, help thy Mother with her  
“clear-ratching. Be happy whilst  
“thou art here.”

But ah! more easily said than  
done. “Alle Joy is darkened; the  
“Mirth of the Land is gone!”

At Squire *Paice's* grand Dinner  
we have been counting on for many  
Days; but it gave me not the Plea-  
sure expected.

The Weather is so foul that I  
am sure Mr. *Milton* would not like  
me to be on the Road, even would  
my Father let me goe.

—While writing the above, heard  
very angrie Voices in the Court-  
yard, my Father's especiallie, louder  
than common; and distinguished  
the Words “Knave,” and “Varlet,”  
and “begone.” Lookt from my  
Window and beheld a Man, booted  
and

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and cloaked, with two Horses, at the Gate, parleying with my Father, who stood in an offensive Attitude, and would not let him in. I could catch such Fragments as, "But, "Sir?" "What! in such Weather "as this?" "Nay, it had not over-  
"cast when I started." "'Tis foul  
"enough now, then." "Let me  
"but have speech of my Mistress."  
"You crosse not my Threshold."  
"Nay, Sir, if but to give her this  
"Letter:"—and turning his Head, I was avised of its being *Hubert*, old Mr. *Milton's* Man; doubtless sent by my Husband to fetch me. Seeing my Father raise his Hand in angrie Action (his Riding-whip being in it), I hasted down as fast as I could, to prevent Mischief, as well as to get my Letter; but, unhappilie, not soe fleetlie as to see more than *Hubert's* flying Skirts as he galloped  
from

of Mary Powell.

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from the Gate, with the led Horse by the Bridle; while my Father flinging downe the torne Letter, walked passionatelie away. I clasped my Hands, and stood mazed for a while,—was then avised to piece the Letter, but could not; onlie making out such Words as “ Sweet “ *Moll,*” in my Husband’s Writing.

*Rose* came this Morning, through Rain and Mire, at some Risk as well as much Inconvenience, to intreat of me, even with Teares, not to vex Mr. *Milton* by anie farther Delays, but to return to him as soon as possible. Kind Soule, her Affection toucht me, and I assured her the more readilie I intended to return Home as soone as I coulde, which was not yet, my Father having taken the Matter into his own Hands, and permitting me noe Escort;

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Escort; but that I questioned not, Mr. *Milton* was onlie awaiting the Weather to settle, to fetch me himself. That he will doe so, is my firm Persuasion. Meanwhile, I make it my Duty to joyn with some Attempt at Cheerfullenesse in the Amusements of others, to make my Father's Confinement to the House less irksome; and have in some Measure succeeded.

Oct. 23

Noe Sichte nor Tidings of Mr. *Milton*.—I am uneasie, frighted at myself, and wish I had never left him, yet hurte at the Neglect. *Hubert*, being a crabbed Temper, made Mischiefe on his Return, I fancy. *Father* is vexed, methinks, at his owne Passion, and hath never, directlie, spoken, in my Hearing, of what passed; but rayleth continuallie agaynst Rebels and Roundheads.

Roundheads. As to *Mother*,—ah me!

Thro' dank and miry Lanes and Bye-roads with *Robin*, to *Sheepscote*.

Waiting for *Rose* in Mr. *Agnew's* small Studdy, where she mostlie sitteth with him, oft acting as his Amanuensis, was avised to take up a printed Sheet of Paper that lay on the Table; but finding it to be of *Latin* Versing, was about to laye it downe agayn, when *Rose* came in. She changed Colour, and in a faltering Voice sayd, “Ah, *Cousin*, do “you know what that is? One of “your Husband's Prooffe Sheets. I “woulde that it coulde interest you “in like manner as it hath me.” Made her noe Answer, laying it aside unconcernedlie, but secretlie felt, as I have oft done before, how stupid it is not to know *Latin*, and resolved to

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to get *Robin* to teach me. He is noe greate Scholar himselfe, soe will not shame me.—I am wearie of hearing of War and Politicks; soe will try Studdy for a while, and see if 'twill cure this dull Payn at my Heart.

Oct 28

*Robin* and I have shut ourselves up for three Hours dailie, in the small Book-room, and have made fayre Progresse. He liketh his Office of Tutor mightilie.

Oct 31

My Lessons are more crabbed, or I am more dull and inattentive, for I cannot fix my Minde on my Book, and am secretlie wearie. *Robin* wearies too. But I will not give up as yet; the more soe as in this quiete Studdy I am out of Sighte and Hearinge of fundrie young Officers *Dick* is continuallie bringing over from *Oxford*, who spend manie Hours

of Mary Powell.

Hours with him in Countrie Sports, and then come into the House, hungry, thirstie, noisie, and idle. I know Mr. *Milton* woulde not like them.

—Surelie he will come soone?—  
I sayd to *Father* last Night, I wanted to hear from Home. He sayd, “Home! Dost call yon Taylor’s “Shop your Home?” soe ironically that I was shamed to say more.

Woulde that I had never married! —then coulde I enjoy my Child-hoode’s Home. Yet I knew not its Value before I quitted it, and had even a stupid Pleasure in anticipating another. Ah me! had I loved Mr. *Milton* more, perhaps I might better have endured the Taylor’s Shop.

*Sheepscote, Nov. 20.*

Annoyed by *Dick’s* Companions, I prayed *Father* to let me stay awhile with *Rose*; and gaining his Consent, came

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came over here Yester-morn, without thinking it needfulle to send Notice, which was perhaps inconsiderate. But she received me with Kisses and Words of Tenderesse, though less Smiling than usuall, and eagerlie accepted mine offered Visitt. Then she ran off to find *Roger*, and I heard them talking earnestlie in a low Voice before they came in. His Face was grave, even stern, when he entred, but he held out his Hand, and sayd, "Mistress *Milton*, you are welcome! how is it with you? and how was Mr. *Milton* when he wrote to you last?" I answered brieflie, he was well: then came a Silence, and then *Rose* took me to my Chamber, which was sweet with Lavender, and its hangings of the whitest. It reminded me too much of my first Week of Marriage, soe I resolved to think  
not

of Mary Powell.

not at all left I shoulde be had Companie, but cheer up and be gay. Soe I askt *Rose* a thousand Questions about her Dairie and Bees, laught much at Dinner, and told Mr. *Agnew* fundrie of the merrie Sayings of *Dick* and his *Oxford* Friends. And, for my Reward, when we were afterwards apart, I heard him tell *Rose* (by Reason of the Walls being thin) that however she might regard me for old Affection's sake, he thought he had never knowne soe unpromising a Character. This made me dulle enoughe all the rest of the Evening, and repent having come to *Sheepscote*: however, he liked me the better for being quiete: and *Rose*, being equallie chekt, we sewed in Silence while he read to us the first Division of *Spencer's Legend of Holinesse*, about *Una* and the Knight, and how they got fun-  
dered

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dered. This led to much serious, yet not unpleasing, Discourse, which lasted till Supper. For the first Time at *Sheepscote*, I coulde not eat, which Mr. *Agnew* observing, prest me to take Wine, and *Rose* woulde start up to fetch some of her Preserves; but I chekt her with a Motion, not being quite able to speak; for their being soe kind made the Teares ready to starte, I knew not why.

Family Prayers, after Supper, rather too long; yet though I coulde not keep up my Attention, they seemed to spread a Calm and a Peace alle about, that extended even to me; and though, after I had undressed, I sat a long while in a Maze, and bethought me how piteous a Creature I was, yet, once layed down, I never sank into deeper, more composing Sleep.

This

This Morning, *Rose* exclaimed,  
“ Dear *Roger* ! onlie think ! *Moll*  
“ has begun to learn *Latin* since she  
“ returned to *Forest Hill*, thinking  
“ to surprise Mr. *Milton* when they  
“ meet.” “ She will not onlie sur-  
“ prise but please him,” returned  
dear *Roger*, taking my Hand very  
kindlie ; “ I can onlie say, I hope  
“ they will meet long before she  
“ can read his *Poemata*, unless she  
“ learns much faster than most  
“ People.” I replied, I learned  
very slowly, and wearied *Robin*’s  
Patience ; on which *Rose*, kissing  
me, cried, “ You will never wearie  
“ mine ; soe, if you please, deare  
“ *Moll*, we will goe to our Lessons  
“ here everie Morning ; and it may  
“ be that I shall get you through  
“ the Grammar faster than *Robin*  
“ can. If we come to anie Diffi-  
“ cultie we shall refer it to *Roger*.”

Now

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Now, Mr. *Agnew's* Looks exprest such Pleasure with both, that it were difficult to tell which felt the most elated; soe calling me deare *Moll* (he hath hitherto Mistress *Miltoned* me ever since I sett Foot in his House), he sayed he would not interrupt our Studdies, though he should be within Call, and soe left us. I had not felt soe happy since *Father's* Birthday; and, though *Rose* kept me close to my Book for two Hours, I found her a far less irksome Tutor than deare *Robin*. Then she went away, singing, to make *Roger's* favourite Dish, and afterwards we took a brisk Walke, and came Home hungrie enoughe to Dinner.

There is a daily Beauty in *Rose's* Life, that I not onlie admire, but am readie to envy. Oh! if *Milton* lived but in the poorest House in  
the

the Countrie, methinks I could be very happy with him.

Chancing to make the above Remark to *Rose*, she cried, “And “why not be happy with him in “*Aldersgate Street*?” I briefly replied that he must get the House first, before it were possible to tell whether I could be happy there or not. *Rose* stared, and exclaimed, “Why, where do you suppose him “to be now?” “Where but at “the Taylor’s in *Bride’s Church- “yard*?” I replied. She claspt her Hands with a Look I shall never forget, and exclaimed in a Sort of vehement Passion, “Oh, *Cousin*, “*Cousin*, how you throw your own “Happineffe away! How awfull “a Pause must have taken place in “your Intercourse with the Man “whom you promised to abide by “till

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“till Death, since you know not  
“that he has long since taken Possession of his new Home; that he  
“strove to have it ready for you at  
“*Michaelmasse*!”

Doubtless I lookt noe less surprised than I felt;—a suddain Prick at the Heart prevented Speech; but it shot acrossse my Heart that I had made out the Words “*Aldersgate*” and “new Home,” in the Fragments of the Letter my Father had torn. *Rose*, misjudging my Silence, burst forth anew with, “Oh, *Cousin! Cousin!* coulde anie Home, however dull and noisefome, drive me from *Roger Agnew*? Onlie think of what you are doing,—of what you are leaving undone!—of what you are preparing against yourself! To put the Wickedness of a selfish Course out of the Account, onlie think of its Melancholic,

“ cholie, its Miseric,—deslitute of  
“ alle the sweet, bright, fresh Well-  
“ springs of Happinesse ;—unblest  
“ by *God* !”

Here *Rose* wept passionately, and claspt her Arms about me ; but, when I began to speak, and to tell her of much that had made me miserable, she hearkened in motionlesse Silence, till I told her that *Father* had torn the Letter and beaten the Messenger. Then she cried, “ Oh, I see now what may and shall be done ! *Roger* shall be Peacemaker,” and ran off with Joyfulness ; I not withholding her. But I can never be joyfuller more—he cannot be Day’s-man betwixt us now—’tis alle too late !

Now that I am at *Forest Hill* agayn, I will essay to continue my Journalling.—

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Mr. *Agnew* was out; and though a keene wintry Wind was blowing, and *Rose* was suffering from Colde, yet she went out to listen for his Horse's Feet at the Gate, with onlie her Apron cast over her Head. Shortlie, he returned; and I heard him say in a troubled Voice, "Alle  
"are in Arms at *Forest Hill*." I felt soe greatlie shocked as to neede to sit downe instead of running forthlie to learn the News. I supposed the parliamentarian Soldiers had advanced, unexpectedlie, upon *Oxford*. His next Words were, "*Dick* is  
"coming for her at Noone—poor  
"Soul, I know not what she will  
"doe—her Father will trust her  
"noe longer with you and me." Then I saw them both passe the Window, slowlie pacing together, and hastened forth to joyn them; but they had turned into the pleached Alley,

Alley, their Backs towards me ; and both in such earnest and apparentlie private Communication, that I dared not interrupt them till they turned aboute, which was not for some While ; for they stood for some Time at the Head of the Alley, still with theire Backs to me, *Rose's* Hair blowing in the cold Wind ; and once or twice she seemed to put her Kerchief to her Eyes.

Now, while I stood mazed and uncertain, I hearde a distant Clatter of Horse's Feet, on the hard Road a good Way off, and could descric *Dick* coming towards *Sheepscote*. *Rose* saw him too, and commenced running towards me ; Mr. *Agnew* following with long Strides. *Rose* drew me back into the House, and sayd, kissing me, " Dearest *Moll*, I  
" am soe forry ; *Roger* hath seen  
" your Father this Morn, and he  
" will

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“ will on no Account spare you to  
“ us anie longer ; and *Dick* is coming  
“ to fetch you even now.” I sayd,  
“ Is *Father* ill ?” “ Oh no,” replied  
Mr. *Agnew* ; then coming up, “ He  
“ is not ill, but he is perturbed at  
“ something which has occurred ;  
“ and, in Truth, soe am I.—But  
“ remember, *Mistress Milton*, re-  
“ member, dear *Cousin*, that when  
“ you married, your *Father’s* Guar-  
“ dianship of you passed into the  
“ Hands of your Husband—your  
“ Husband’s House was thenceforth  
“ your Home ; and in quitting it  
“ you committed a Fault you may  
“ yet repaire, though this offensive  
“ Act has made the Difficultie much  
“ greater.”—“ Oh, what has hap-  
“ pened ?” I impatientlie cried.  
Just then, *Dick* comes in with his  
usual blunt Salutations, and then  
cries, “ Well, *Moll*, are you ready  
“ to

of Mary Powell.

“to goe back?” “Why should I  
“be?” I sayd, “when I am soe  
“happy here? unless *Father* is ill,  
“or Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* are tired  
“of me.” They both interrupted,  
there was nothing they soe much  
desired, at this present, as that I  
shoulde prolong my Stay. And you  
know, *Dick*, I added, that *Forest  
Hill* is not soe pleasant to me just  
now as it hath commonlie beene, by  
Reason of your *Oxford* Companions.  
He brieflie sayd, I neede not mind  
that, they were coming no more to  
the House, *Father* had decreed it.  
And you know well enough, *Moll*,  
that what *Father* decrees, must be,  
and he hath decreed that you must  
come Home now; soe no more  
Ado, I pray you, but fetch your  
Cloak and Hood, and the Horses  
shall come round, for ’twill be late  
ere we reach Home. “Nay, you  
“must

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“ must dine here at all Events,” sayd *Rose*; “ I know, *Dick*, you love “ roast Pork.” Soe *Dick* relented. Soe *Rose*, turning to me, prayed me to bid *Cicely* hasten Dinner; the which I did, tho’ thinking it strange *Rose* should not goe herself. But, as I returned, I hearde her say, Not a Word of it, dear *Dick*, at the least, till after Dinner, lest you spoil her Appetite. Soe *Dick* sayd he shoulde goe and look after the Horses. I sayd then, brisklie, I see somewhat is the Matter—pray tell me what it is. But *Rose* looked quite dull, and walked to the Window. Then Mr. *Agnew* sayd, “ You seem as dissatisfied to leave us, *Cousin*, as we “ are to lose you; and yet you are “ going back to *Forest Hill*—to that “ Home in which you will doubt- “ lesse be happy to live all your “ Dayes.”—“ At *Forest Hill*?” I sayd,

sayd, "Oh no! I hope not." "And  
"why?" sayd he quicklie. I hung  
my Head, and muttered, "I hope,  
"some Daye, to goe back to Mr.  
"Milton." "And why not at  
"once?" sayd he. I sayd, "*Father*  
"would not let me." "Nay, that  
"is childish," he answered, "your  
"Father could not hinder you if  
"you wanted not the Mind to goe  
"—it was your first seeming foe  
"loth to return, that made him  
"think you unhappie and refuse to  
"part with you." I sayd, "And  
"what if I were unhappie?" He  
paused; and knew not at the Moment  
what Answer to make, but shortlie  
replied by another Question, "What  
"Cause had you to be foe?" I sayd,  
"That was more easily askt than  
"answered, even if there were anie  
"Neede I shoulde answer it, or he  
"had anie Right to ask it." He cried  
in

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in an Accent of Tenderneſſe that ſtill wrings my Heart to remember, “ Oh, queſtion not the Right! I “ only wiſh to make you happy. “ Were you not happy with Mr. “ *Milton* during the Week you ſpent “ together here at *Sheepſcote* ? ” Thereat I coulde not refrayn from burſting into Tears. *Rose* now ſprang forward; but Mr. *Agnew* ſayd, “ Let her weep, let her weep, “ it will do her good.” Then, alle at once it occurred to me that my Huſband was awaiting me at Home, and I cried, “ Oh, is Mr. *Milton* at “ *Foreſt Hill* ? ” and felt my Heart full of Gladneſs. Mr. *Agnew* answered, “ Not ſoe, not ſoe, poor “ *Moll* : ” and, looking up at him, I ſaw him wiping his Brow, though the Daye was ſoe chill. “ As well “ tell her now,” ſayd he to *Rose* : and then taking my Hand, “ Oh, “ Mrs.

of Mary Powell.

“ Mrs. *Milton*, can you wonder that  
“ your Husband should be angry?  
“ How can you wonder at anie Evil  
“ that may result from the Provoca-  
“ tion you have given him? What  
“ Marvell, that since you cast him  
“ off, all the sweet Fountains of  
“ his Affections would be embittered,  
“ and that he should retaliate by  
“ seeking a Separation, and even a  
“ Divorce?”—There I stopt him  
with an Outcry of “ Divorce?”  
“ Even soe,” he most mournfully  
replyd, “ and I seeke not to excuse  
“ him, since two Wrongs make not  
“ a Right.” “ But,” I cried, pas-  
sionately weeping, “ I have given  
“ him noe Cause; my Heart has  
“ never for a Moment strayed to  
“ another, nor does he, I am sure,  
“ expect it.” “ Ne’erthelesse,” en-  
joyned Mr. *Agnew*, “ he is soe  
“ aggrieved and chafed, that he has  
“ followed

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“ followed up what he considers  
 “ your Breach of the Marriage  
 “ Contract by writing and publishing  
 “ a Book on Divorce; the Tenor  
 “ of which coming to your Father’s  
 “ Ears, has violently incensed him.  
 “ And now, dear *Cousin*, having, by  
 “ your Waywardness, kindled this  
 “ Flame, what remains for you but  
 “ to—nay, hear me, hear me, *Moll*,  
 “ for *Dick* is coming in, and I may  
 “ not let him hear me urge you to  
 “ the onlie Course that can regayne  
 “ your Peace—Mr. *Milton* is still  
 “ your Husband; each of you have  
 “ now Something to forgive; do  
 “ you be the firste; nay, seeke *his*  
 “ Forgivenessse, and you shall be  
 “ happier than you have been yet.”

—But I was weeping without  
 controule; and *Dick* coming in,  
 and with *Dick* the Dinner, I aske  
 to be excused, and soe soughte my  
 Chamber.

of Mary Powell.

Chamber, to weep there without Restraynt or Witnesse. Ppor *Rose* came up, as soone as she coulde leave the Table, and told me she had eaten as little as I, and woulde not even presse me to eat. But she carest me and comforted me, and urged in her owne tender Way alle that had beene sayd by Mr. *Agnew*; even protesting that if she were in my Place, she woulde not goe back to *Forest Hill*, but straight to *London*, to entreat with Mr. *Milton* for his Mercy. But I told her I could not do that, even had I the Means for the Journey; for that my Heart was turned against the Man who coulde, for the venial Offence of a young Wife, in abiding too long with her old Father, not onlie cast her off from his Love, but hold her up to the World's Blame and Scorn, by making their domestic Quarrel the

the

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the Matter for a printed Attack. *Rose* sayd, "I admit he is wrong, " but indeed, indeed, *Moll*, you are " wrong too, and you were wrong " *first*:" and she sayd this soe often, that at length we came to crosser Words; when *Dick*, calling to me from below, would have me make haste, which I was glad to doe, and left *Sheepscote* less regretfullie than I had expected. *Rose* kist me with her gravest Face. Mr. *Agnew* put me on my Horse, and sayd, as he gave me the Rein, "Now think! " now think! even yet!" and then, as I silently rode off, "God bless " you."

I held down my Head; but, at the Turn of the Road, lookt back, and saw him and *Rose* watching us from the Porch. *Dick* cried, "I " am righte glad we are off at last, " for *Father* is downright crazie " aboute

of Mary Powell.

“aboute this Bufineffe, and mistrust-  
“fulle of *Agnew's* Influence over  
“you,”—and would have gone on  
railing, but I bade him for Pitic's  
Sake be quiete.

The Effects of my owne Follic,  
the Losse of Home, Husband, Name,  
the Opinion of the *Agnews*, the  
Opinion of the Worlde, rose up  
agaynst me, and almost drove me  
mad. And, just as I was thinking  
I had better lived out my Dayes and  
dyed earlie in *Bride's Churchyarde*  
than that alle this should have come  
about, the suddain Recollection of  
what *Rose* had that Morning tolde  
me, which soe manie other Thoughts  
had driven out of my Head, viz.  
that Mr. *Milton* had, in his Desire  
to please me, while I was onlie bent  
on pleasing myself, been secretly  
striving to make readie the *Aldersgate*  
*Street* House agaynst my Return,—  
soe

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foe overcame me, that I wept as I rode along. Nay, at the Corner of a branch Road, had a Mind to beg *Dick* to let me goe to *London*; but a glance at his dogged Countenance sufficed to foreshow my Answer.

Half dead with Fatigue and Griefe when I reached Home, the tender Embraces of my Father and Mother completed the Overthrowe of my Spiritts. I tooke to my Bed; and this is the first Daye I have left it; nor will they let me send for *Rose*, nor even tell her I am ill.

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Jan 1

The new Year opens drearilie, on Affairs both publick and private. The Loaf parted at Breakfast this Morning, which, as the Saying goes, is a Sign of Separation; but *Mother* onlie sayd 'twas because it was badly kneaded, and chid *Margery*. She hath beene telling me, but now,  
how

of Mary Powell.

how I mighte have 'scaped all my Troubles, and scene as much as I woulde of her and *Father*, and yet have contented Mr. *Milton* and beene counted a good Wife. Noe Advice soe ill to bear as that which comes too late.

I am sick of this journalling, soe shall onlie put downe the Date of *Robin's* leaving Home. *Lord* have Mercy on him, and keepe him in Safetie. This is a shorte Prayer; therefore, easier to be often repeated. When he kissed me, he whispered, "*Moll*, pray for me."

*Father* does not seeme to miss *Robin* much, tho' he dailie drinks his Health after that of the King. Perhaps he did not miss me anie more when I was in *London*, though it was true and naturall enough he should

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should like to see me agayn. We should have beene used to our Separation by this Time; there would have beene nothing corroding in it. . . . .

I pray for *Robin* everie Night. Since he went, the House has lost its Sunshine. When I was soe anxious to return to *Forest Hill*, I never counted on his leaving it.

FEB 1.

Oh Heaven, what would I give to see the *Skirts* of *Mr. Milton's* Garments agayn! My Heart is sick unto Death. I have been reading some of my *Journall*, and tearing out much childish Nonsense at the Beginning; but coulde not destroy the painfull Records of the last Year. How unhappy a Creature am I!—wearie, wearie of my Life, yet no Ways inclined for Death. Lord, have Mercy upon me.

of Mary Powell.

---

I spend much of my Time, now, in the Book-room, and, though I essay not to pursue the *Latin*, I read much *English*, at the least, more than ever I did in my Life before; but often I fancy I am reading when I am onlie dreaming. *Oxford* is far too gay a Place for me now ever to goe neare it, but my Brothers are much there, and *Father* in his Farm, and *Mother* in her Kitchen; and the Neighbours, when they call, look on me strangelie, so that I have noe Love for them. How different is *Rose's* holy, seclused, yet cheerefulle Life at *Sheepscote*! She hath a Nurserie now, soe cannot come to me, and *Father* likes not I should goe to her.

They say their Majestyes' Parting at *Abingdon* was very sorrowfulle and tender. The *Lord* send them  
better

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better Times! The Queen is to my Mind a most charming Lady, and well worthy of his Majesty's Affection; yet it seems to me amisse, that thro' her Influence, last Summer, the Opportunitie of Pacification was lost. But she was elated, and naturallie enoughe, at her personall Successes from the Time of her landing. To me, there seems nothing soe good as Peace. I know, indeede, Mr. *Milton* holds that there may be such Things as a holy War and a cursed Peace.

April 10.

*Father*, having a Hoarseness, hath deputed me, of late, to read the Morning and Evening Prayers. How beautifulle is our Liturgie! I grudge at the Puritans for having abolished it; and though I felt not its comprehensive Fullnesse before I married, nor indeed till now, yet

I wearied to Death in *London* at the puritanicall Ordinances and Conscience-meetings and extempore Prayers, wherein it was soe oft the Speaker's Care to show Men how godly he was. Nay, I think Mr. *Milton* altogether wrong in the View he takes of praying to *God* in other Men's Words; for doth he not doe soe, everie Time he followeth the Sense of another Man's extempore Prayer, wherein he is more at his Mercy and Caprice than when he hath a printed Form set down, wherein he sees what is coming?

Walking in the Home-cloze this Morning, it occurred to me that Mr. *Milton* intended bringing me to *Forest Hill* about this Time; and that if I had abided patientlie with him through the Winter, we might now have beene both here happily together;

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together; untroubled by that Sting which now poisons everie Enjoyment of mine, and perhaps of his. *Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner.*

June 23

Just after writing the above, I was in the Garden, gathering a few Coronation Flowers and Sops-in-Wine, and thinking they were of deeper crimson at *Sheepscote*, and wondering what *Rose* was just then about, and whether had I beene born in her Place, I shoulde have beene as goode and happy as she,—when *Harry* came up, looking somewhat grave. I sayd, “What is “the Matter?” He gave Answer, “*Rose* hath lost her Child.” Oh! ——— that we should live but a two Hours’ Journey apart, and that she coulde lose a Child three Months olde *whom I had never seene?*

I ran to *Father*, and never left off  
praying

praying him to let me goe to her till he consented.

—What, and if I had begged as hard, at the firste, to goe back to Mr. *Milton*? might he not have consented *then*?

. . . Soe *Harry* took me; and as we drew neare *Sheepscote*, I was avised to think how grave, how barely friendlie had beene our last Parting; and to ponder, would *Rose* make me welcome now? The Infant, *Harry* tolde me, had beene dead some Dayes; and, as we came in Sight of the little grey old Church, we saw a Knot of People coming out of the Churchyard, and guesed the Baby had just beene buried. Soe it proved—Mr. *Agnew's* House-door stood ajar; and when we tapped softlie and *Cicely* admitted us, we could see him standing by *Rose*, who was sitting on the Ground  
and

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and crying as if she would not be comforted. When she hearde my Voice, she started up, flung her Arms about me, crying more bitterlie than before, and I cried too; and Mr. *Agnew* went away with *Harry*. Then *Rose* sayd to me, "You must "not leave me agayn." . . .

. . . . In the Cool of the Evening, when *Harry* had left us, she took me into the Churchyarde, and scattered the little Grave with Flowers; and then continued sitting beside it on the Grasse, quiete, but not comfortlesse. I am avised to think she prayed. Then Mr. *Agnew* came forth and sate on a flat Tombstone hard by; and without one Word of Introduction took out his *Psalter*, and commenced reading the Psalmes for that Evening's Service; to wit, the 41st, the 42d, the 43de; in a low solemne Voice; and methoughte

of Mary Powell.

I never in my Life hearde aniething  
to equall it in the Way of Consola-  
tion. *Rose's* heavie Eyes graduallie  
lookt up from the Ground into her  
Husband's Face, and thence up to  
Heaven. After this, he read, or  
rather repeated, the Collect at the  
end of the Buriall Service, putting  
this Expression,—“ As our Hope is,  
“ this our deare Infant doth.” Then  
he went on to say in a soothing  
Tone, “ There hath noe misfortune  
“ happened to us, but such as is  
“ common to the Lot of alle Men.  
“ We are alle Sinners, even to the  
“ youngest, fayrest, and seeminglie  
“ purest among us; and Death  
“ entered the World by Sin, and,  
“ constituted as we are, we would  
“ not, even if we could, dispense  
“ with Death. For, where doth it  
“ convey us? From this burthen-  
“ some, miserable World, into the  
“ generall

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“ generall Assemblie of *Christ's* First-  
 “ born, to be united with the Spiritts  
 “ of the Just made perfect, to par-  
 “ take of everie Enjoyment which  
 “ in this World is unconnected with  
 “ Sin, together with others that are  
 “ unknowne and unspeakable. And  
 “ there, we shall agayn have *Bodies*  
 “ as well as Soules; Eyes to see,  
 “ but not to shed Tears; Voices to  
 “ speak and sing, not to utter La-  
 “ mentations; Hands, to doe *God's*  
 “ Work; Feet, and it may be,  
 “ Wings, to carry us on his Errands.  
 “ Such will be the Blessedness of his  
 “ glorified Saints; even of those  
 “ who, having been Servants of  
 “ Satan till the eleventh Hour,  
 “ laboured penitentlie and diligentlie  
 “ for their heavenlie Master one  
 “ Hour before Sunset; but as for  
 “ those who, dying in mere Infancie,  
 “ never committed actuall Sin, they  
 follow

“ follow the Lamb whithersoever  
“ he goeth! ‘ Oh, think of this,  
“ dear *Rose*, and Sorrow not as those  
“ without Hope; for be assured,  
“ your Child hath more reall Reason  
“ to be grieved for you, than you  
“ for *him*.’ ”

With this, and like Discourse, that distilled like the Dew, or the small Rain on the tender Grassie, did *Roger Agnew* comfort his Wife, untill the Moon had risen. Likewise he spake to us of those who lay buried arounde, how one had died of a broken Heart, another of sudden Joy, another had let Patience have her perfect Work through Years of lingering Disease. Then we walked flowlie and composedlie Home, and ate our Supper peacefullie, *Rose* not refusing to eat, though she took but little.

Since that Evening, she hath,  
at

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at Mr. *Agnew's* Wish, gone much among the Poor, reading to one, working for another, carrying Food and Medicine to another; and in this I have borne her Companie. I like it well. Methinks how pleasant and seemlie are the Duties of a country Minister's Wife! a God-fearing Woman, that is, who considereth the Poor and Needy, insteade of aiming to be frounced and purfled like her richest Neighbours. Mr. *Agnew* was reading to us, last Night, of *Bernard Gilpin*—he of whom the *Lord Burleigh* sayd, “Who can blame that Man for not accepting a Bishopric?” How charmed were we with the Description of the Simplicite and Hospitalitie of his Method of living at *Houghton*!—There is another Place, of nearlie the same Name, in *Buckinghamshire*—not *Houghton*, but  
*Horton*,

Horton, . . . . where one Mr. John Milton spent five of the best Years of his Life,—and where methinks his Wife could have been happier with him than in *English Court-garde*.—But it profits not to wish and to will.—What was to be, *must* be, & there's an *End*.

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“ we shall be driven to the Wall  
“ alle our Lives, unless we have  
“ this victorious Struggle with Cir-  
“ cumstances. I seldom allude,  
“ *Cousin*, to yours, which are almoste  
“ too delicate for me to meddle  
“ with; and yet I hardlie feele  
“ justified in letting soe many Op-  
“ portunities escape. Do I offend?  
“ or may I go on?—Onlie think,  
“ then, how voluntarilie you have  
“ placed yourself in your present  
“ uncomfortable Situation. The  
“ Tree cannot resist the graduall  
“ Growth of the Moss upon it;  
“ but you might, anie Day, anie  
“ Hour, have freed yourself from  
“ the equallie graduall Formation  
“ of the Net that has enclosed you  
“ at last. You entered too hastilie  
“ into your firste—nay, let that  
“ pass,—you gave too shorte a  
“ Triall of your new Home before  
“ you

“ you became disgusted with it.  
“ Admit it to have been dull, even  
“ unhealthfulle, were you justified  
“ in forsaking it at a Month’s  
“ End? But your Husband gave  
“ you Leave of Absence, though  
“ obtayned on false Pretences.—  
“ When you found them to be false,  
“ should you not have cleared your-  
“ self to him of Knowledge of the

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“ say you have been the Victim of  
“ Circumstances.”

I made no Answer; onlie felt  
much moven, and very angric. I  
sayd, “ If I wished to goe back,  
“ *Mr. Milton* woulde not receive me  
“ now.”

“ Will you try?” sayd *Roger*.  
“ Will you but let me try? Will  
“ you let me write to him?”

I had a Mind to say “ Yes.”—  
Insteade, I answered “ No.”

“ Then there’s an End,” cried he  
sharplie. “ Had you made but one  
“ *sayre Triall*, whether *successfulle*  
“ or noe, I coulde have been satsified  
“ —no, not satsified, but I woulde  
“ have esteemed you, coulde have  
“ taken your Part. As it is, the  
“ less I say just now, perhaps, the  
“ better. Forgive me for having  
“ spoken at alle.”

—Afterwards, I hearde him  
say



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tumbled a Key with curious Wards —I knew it at once for one that belonged to a certayn Algum-wood Casket Mr. *Milton* had Recourse to dailie, because he kept small Change in it; and I knew not I had brought it away! 'Twas worked in Grotesque, the Casket, by *Benvenuto*, for *Clement* the Seventh, who for some Reason would not have it; and soe it came somehow to *Clementillo*, who gave it to Mr. *Milton*. Thought I, how uncomfortable the Loss of this Key must have made him! he must have needed it a hundred Times! even if he hath bought a new Casket, I will for it he habituellie goes agayn and agayn to the old one, and then he remembers that he lost the Key the same Day that he lost his Wife. I heartilie wish he had it back. Ah, but he feels not the one Loss



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almost say grufflie,—“ what am I to  
“ write?”

“ To tell him I have this Key,”  
I made Answer faltering.

“ That Key!” cried he.

“ Yes, the Key of his Algum-  
“ wood Casket, which I knew not  
“ I had, and which I think he must  
“ miss dailie.”

He lookt at me with the utmost  
Impatience. “ And is that alle?”  
he sayd.

“ Yes, alle,” I sayd trembling.

“ And have you nothing more to  
“ tell him?” sayd he.

“ No—” after a Pause, I replyed.  
*Rose's* Countenance fell.

“ Then you must ask some one  
“ else to write for you, Mrs. *Milton*,”  
burst forth *Roger Agnew*, “ unless  
“ you choose to write for yourself.  
“ I have neither Part nor Lot in  
“ it.”



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“pose an abrupt, trivial Communi-  
“cation about an old Key!”

“It needed not to have been  
“abrupt,” I sayd, “nor yet trivial;  
“for I meant it to have beene  
“express kindlie.”

“You said not that before,”  
answered he.

“Because you gave me not Time.  
“—Because you chid me and fright-  
“ened me.”

He stood silent, some While, upon  
this; grave, yet softer, and mechan-  
callie playing with the Key, which  
he had taken from my Hand. *Rose*  
looking in his Face anxiously. At  
length, to disturbe his Reverie, she  
playfully tooke it from him, saying,  
in School-girl Phrase,

“This is the Key of the  
“Kingdom!”

“Of the Kingdom of Heaven,  
“it mighte be!” exclaimed *Roger*,  
“if



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"think foe," he replied. "First for  
 "yourself, dear *Moll*, putting aside  
 "for a Time the Consideration of  
 "your Youth, Beauty, Franknesse,  
 "Mirthfullenesse, and a certayn girl-  
 "ish Drollerie and Mischiefe that are  
 "all very well in fitting Time and  
 "Place,—what remains in you for  
 "a Mind like *John Milton's* to repose  
 "upon? what Stabilitie? what Sym-  
 "pathie? what steadfast Principle?  
 "You take noe Pains to apprehend  
 "and relish his favourite Pursuits;  
 "you care not for his wounded  
 "Feelings, you consult not his In-  
 "terests, anie more than your owne  
 "Duty. Now, is such the Cha-  
 "racter to make *Milton* happy?"

"No one can answer, that but  
 "himself," I replied, deeplie mor-  
 tyfide.

"Well, he *has* answered it," sayd  
 Mr. *Agnew*, taking up the Letter  
 he



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“ think soe,” he replied. “ First for  
 “ yourself, dear *Moll*, putting aside  
 “ for a Time the Consideration of  
 “ your Youth, Beauty, Franknesse,  
 “ Mirthfullenesse, and a certayn girl-  
 “ ish Drollerie and Mischiefe that are  
 “ all very well in fitting Time and  
 “ Place,—what remains in you for  
 “ a Mind like *John Milton’s* to repose  
 “ upon? what Stabilitie? what Sym-  
 “ pathie? what steadfast Principle?  
 “ You take noe Pains to apprehend  
 “ and relish his favourite Pursuits;  
 “ you care not for his wounded  
 “ Feelings, you consult not his In-  
 “ terests, anie more than your owne  
 “ Duty. Now, is such the Cha-  
 “ racter to make *Milton* happy?”

“ No one can answer, that but  
 “ himself,” I replied, deeplie morty-  
 fyfide.

“ Well, he *has* answered it,” sayd  
 Mr. *Agnew*, taking up the Letter  
 he

he and *Rose* had beene reading when I interrupted them . . . . “ You  
“ must know, *Cousin*, that his and  
“ my close Friendship hath beene a  
“ good deal interrupted by this  
“ Matter. ’Twas under my Roof  
“ you met. *Rose* had imparted to  
“ me much of her earlie Interest  
“ in you. I fancied you had good  
“ Dispositions which, under mas-  
“ terlie Trayning, would ripen into  
“ noble Principles; and therefore  
“ promoted your Marriage as far as  
“ my Interest with your Father had  
“ Weight. I own I was surprised  
“ at his easilie obtayned Consent. . . .  
“ but, that *you*, once domesticated  
“ with such a Man as *John Milton*,  
“ shoulde find your Home unin-  
“ teresting, your Affections free to  
“ stray back to your owne Family,  
“ was what I had never contem-  
“ plated.”

Here

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Here I made a Show of taking the Letter, but he held it back.

“No, *Moll*, you disappointed us everie Way. And, for a Time, *Rose* and I were ashamed, *for* you rather than of you, that we left noe Means neglected of trying to preserve your Place in your Husband’s Regard. But you did not bear us out; and then he beganne to take it amisse that we upheld you. Soe then, after some warme and cool Words, our Correspondence languished; and hath but now beene renewed.”

“He has written us a most kind Condolence,” interrupted *Rose*, “on the Death of our Baby.”

“Yes, most kindlie, most nobly: exprest,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*; “but what a Conclusion!”

And then, after this long Preamble, he offered me the Letter,  
the

the Beginning of which, tho' doubtlesse well enough, I marked not, being impatient to reach the latter Part; wherein I found myself spoken of soe bitterlie, soe harshlie, as that I too plainly saw *Roger Agnew* had not beene beside the Mark when he decided I could never make Mr. *Milton* happy. Payned and wounded Feeling made me lay aside the Letter without proffering another Word, and retreat without soe much as a Sigh or a Sob into mine own Chamber; but noe longer could the Restraynt be maintained. I fell to weeping soe passionatelie that *Rose* prayed to come in, and condoled with me, and advised me, soe as that at length my Weeping bated, and I promised to return below when I shoulde have bathed mine Eyes and smoothed my Hair; but I have not gone down yet.

1644  
Bedtime.

I think I shall send to *Father* to have me Home at the Beginning of next Week. *Rose* needes me not, now; and it cannot be pleasant to *Mr. Agnew* to see my sorrowfulle Face about the House. His Reproose and my Husband's together have riven my Heart; I think I shall never laugh agayn, nor smile but after a piteous Sorte; and soe People will cease to love me, for there is Nothing in me of a graver Kind to draw their Affection; and soe I shall lead a moping Life unto the End of my Dayes.

—Luckilie for me, *Rose* hath much Sewing to doe; for she hath undertaken with great Energic her Labours for the Poore, and consequentlie spends less Time in her Husband's Studdy; and, as I help her to the best of my Means, my Sewing hides my Lack of Talking.

and

of Mary Powell.

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and Mr. *Agnew* reads to us such Books as he deems entertayning; yet, half the Time, I hear not what he reads. Still, I did not decme so much Amusement could have beene found in Books; and there are some of his, that, if not soe cumbrous, I woulde fain borrow.

I have made up my Mind now, that I shall never see Mr. *Milton* more; and am resolved to submitt to it without another Tear.

*Rose* sayd, this Morning, she was glad to see me more composed; and soe am I; but never was more miserable.

Mr. *Agnew's* religious Services at the End of the Week have alwaies more than usuall Matter and Meaning in them. They are neither soe drowfy as those I have beene for  
manic

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manie Years accustomed to at Home, nor soe wearisome as to remind me of the *Puritans*. Were there manie such as he in our Church, soe faithfulle, servent, and thoughtfulle, methinks there would be fewer Schismaticks; but still there would be some, because there are alwaies some that like to be the uppermost.

. . . . To-nighte, Mr. *Agnew's* Prayers went straight to my Heart; and I privilie turned sundrie of his generall Petitions into particular ones, for myself and *Robin*, and also for Mr. *Milton*. This gave such unwonted Relief, that since I entered into my Closet, I have repeated the same particularlie; one Request seeming to grow out of another, till I remained I know not how long on my Knees, and will bend them yet agayn, ere I go to Bed.

How sweetlie the Moon shines,  
through

of Mary Powell.

through my Casement to-night !  
I am almoste avised to accede to  
*Rose's* Request of staying here to the  
End of the Month :—everie Thing  
here is soe peacefull ; and *Forest  
Hill* is dull, now *Robin* is away.

How blessed a Sabbath !—Can it  
be, that I thought, onlie two Days  
back, I shoulde never know Peace  
agayn ? Joy I may not, but Peace  
I can and doe. And yet nought  
hath amended the unfortunate Con-  
dition of mine Affairs ; but a different  
Colouring is caste upon them—the  
*Lord* grant that it may last ! How  
hath it come soe, and how may it  
be preserved ? This Morn, when I  
awoke, 'twas with a Sense of Relief  
such as we have when we miss some  
wearying bodilie Payn ; a Feeling  
as though I had beene forgiven, yet  
not by Mr. *Milton*, for I knew he  
had

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had not forgiven me. Then, it must be, I was forgiven by God; and why? I had done nothing to get his Forgiveness, only presumed on his Mercy to ask manie Things I had noe Right to expect. And yet I felt I *was* forgiven. Why then mighte not Mr. *Milton* some Day forgive me? Should the Debt of ten thousand Talents be cancelled, and not the Debt of a hundred Pence? Then I thought on that same Word, Talents; and considered, had I ten, or even one? Decided to consider it at leisure, more closelie, and to make over to God henceforthe, be they ten, or be it one. Then, dressed with much Composure, and went down to Breakfast.

Having marked that Mr. *Agnew* and *Rose* affected not Companie on this Day, spent it chieslie by myself, except at Church and Meal-times; partlie

partlie in my Chamber, partlie in the Garden Bowre by the Bee-hives. Made manie Resolutions, which, in Church, I converted into Prayers and Promises. Hence, my holy Peace.

*Rose* proposed, this Morning, we shoulde resume our Studdies. Felt loath to comply, but did soe nevertheless, and afterwards we walked manie Miles, to visit some poor Folk. This Evening, Mr. *Agnew* read us the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. How lifelike are the Portraitures! I mind me that Mr. *Milton* shewed me the *Talbot* Inn, that Day we crost the River with Mr. *Marvell*.

How heartilie do I wish I had never read that same Letter!—or rather, that it had never beene written. Thus it is, even with our  
Wishes.

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Wishes. We think ourselves reasonable in wishing some small Thing were otherwise, which it were quite as impossible to alter as some great Thing. Neverthelesse I cannot help fretting over the Remembrance of that Part wherein he spake such bitter Things of my "most ungoverned Passion for Revellings" and Junketings." Sure, he would not call my Life too merrie now, could he see me lying wakefulle on my Bed, could he see me preventing the Morning Watch, could he see me at my Prayers, at my Books, at my Needle. . . . He shall find he hath judged too hardlie of poor *Moll*, even yet.

Wednesday

Took a cold Dinner in a Basket with us to-day, and ate our rusticall Repast on the Skirt of a Wood, where we could see the Squirrels at  
*theire*

theire Gambols. Mr. *Agnew* lay on the *Grasse*, and *Rose* took out her Knitting, whereat he laught, and sayd she was like the *Dutch* Women, that must knit, whether mourning or feasting, and even on the Sabbath. Having laught her out of her Work, he drew forth Mr. *George Herbert's* Poems, and read us a Strayn which pleased *Rose* and me soe much, that I shall copy it herein, to have always by me.

*How fresh, oh Lord ; how sweet and  
clean*

*Are thy Returns ! e'en as the Flowers  
in Spring,*

*To which, beside theire owne De-  
mesne,*

*The late pent Frosts Tributes of Plea-  
sure bring.*

*Grief melts away like Snow in May,  
As if there were noe such cold Thing.*

*Who*

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*Who would have thought my shrivelled  
Heart*

*Woulde have recovered greenness? it  
was gone*

*Quite Underground, as Flowers depart  
To see their Mother-root, when they  
have blown,*

*Where they together, alle the hard  
Weather,*

*Dead to the World, keep House alone.*

*These are thy Wonders, Lord of Power!  
Killing and quickening, bringing down  
to Hell*

*And up to Heaven, in an Hour,  
Making a Chiming of a passing Bell.  
We say amiss "this or that is;"  
Thy Word is alle, if we could spell.*

*Ob that I once past changing were!  
Fast in thy Paradise, where no Flowers  
can wither;*

*Manie*

of Mary Powell.

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*Manie a Spring I shoot up faire,  
Offering at Heaven, growing and  
groaning thither,  
Nor doth my Flower want a Spring  
Shower,  
My Sins and I joyning together.*

*But while I grow in a straight Line,  
Still upwards bent, as if Heaven were  
my own,  
Thy Anger comes, and I decline.—  
What Frost to that? What Pole is  
not the Zone  
Where alle Things burn, when thou  
dost turn,  
And the least Frown of thine is shewn?*

*And now, in Age, I bud agayn,  
After soe manie Deaths, I bud and  
write,  
I once more smell the Dew and Rain,  
And relish Versing! Oh my onlie  
Light!*

*It*

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*It cannot be that I am he  
On whom thy Tempests fell alle Night?*

*These are thy Wonders, Lord of Love,  
To make us see we are but Flowers  
that glide,*

*Which, when we once can feel and  
prove,*

*Thou hast a Garden for us where to  
bide.*

*Who would be more, swelling their  
Store,*

*Forfeit their Paradise by their Pride.*

Thursday.

*Father sent over Diggory with a  
Letter for me from deare Robin:  
alsoe, to ask when I was minded to  
return Home, as Mother wants to  
goe to Sandford. Fixed the Week  
after next; but Rose says I must be  
here agayn at the Apple-gathering.  
Answered Robin's Letter. He look-  
eth not for Choyce of fine Words;  
nor*

nor noteth an Error here and there in the Spelling.

Life flows away here in such unmarked Tranquilitie, that one hath Nothing whereof to write, or to remember what distinguished one Day from another. I am sad, yet not dulle; methinks I have grown some Yeares older since I came here. I can fancy elder Women feeling much as I doe now. I have Nothing to desire, Nothing to hope, that is likelie to come to pass—Nothing to regret, except I begin soe far back, that my whole Life hath neede, as 'twere, to begin over agayn. . . .

Mr. *Agnew* translates to us Portions of *Thuanus* his Historie, and the Letters of *Theodore Beza*, concerning the *French* Reformed Church; oft prolix, yet interesting, especially with Mr. *Agnew's* Comments, and  
Allusions

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Allusions to our own Time. On the other Hand, *Rose* reads *Davila*, the sworne Apologiste of *Catherine de' Medicis*, whose charming *Italian* even I can comprehend; but alle is false and plausible. How sad, that the wrong Partie shoulde be victorious! Soe it may befall in this Land; though, indeede, I have hearde soe much bitter Rayling on bothe Sides, that I know not which is right. The Line of Demarcation is not soe distinctly drawn, methinks, as 'twas in *France*. Yet it cannot be right to take up Arms agaynst constituted Authorities?—Yet, and if those same Authorities abuse their Trust? Nay, Women cannot understand these Matters, and I thank Heaven they need not. Onlie, they cannot help siding with those they love; and sometimes those they love are on opposite Sides.

Mr.

of Mary Powell.

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Mr. *Agnew* sayth, the secular Arm shoulde never be employed in spirituall Matters, and that the *Hugenots* committed a grave Mistake in choosng Princes and Admirals for their Leaders, insteade of simple Preachers with Bibles in their hands; and he askt, “ did *Luther* or *Peter* “ the Hermit most manifestlie labour “ with the Blessing of *God* ? ”

. . . . I have noted the Heads of Mr. *Agnew's* Readings, after a Fashion of *Rose's*, in order to have a shorte, comprehensive Account of the Whole; and this hath abridged my journalling. It is the more profitable to me of the two, changes the sad Current of Thought, and, though an unaccustomed Task, I like it well.

On *Monday*, I return to *Forest Hill*. I am well pleased to have yet another

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another *Sheepscote* Sabbath. To-day we had the rare Event of a Dinner-guest; soe full of what the Rebels are doing, and alle the Horrors of Strife, that he seemed to us quiete Folks, like the Denizen of another World.

*Forest Hill, August 3.*

Aug. 3.

Home agayn, and *Mother* hath gone on her long intended Visitt to Uncle *John*, taking with her the two youngest. *Father* much pre-occupide, by reason of the Supplies needed for his Majesty's Service; soe that, sweet *Robin* being away, I find myselfe lonely. *Harry* rides with me in the Evening, but the Mornings I have alle to myself; and when I have fulfilled *Mother's* Behefts in the Kitchen and Still-room, I have nought but to read in our somewhat scant Collection of Books,

of Mary Powell.

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Books, the moſte Part whercof are religious. And (not on that Account, but by reaſon I have read the moſt of them before), methinks I will write to borrow ſome of *Roſe* ; for Change of Reading hath now become a Want. I am minded alſo, to ſeek out and miniſter unto ſome poore Folk after her Faſhion. Now that I am Queen of the Larder, there is manie a wholeſome Scrap at my Diſpoſal, and there are likewise fundrie Phyſiques in my Mother's Cloſet, which ſhe addeth to Year by Year, and never wants, we are ſoe ſeldom ill.

Dear *Father* ſayd this Evening, as we came in from a Walk on the Terrace, “ My ſweet *Moll*, you were  
“ ever the Light of the Houſe ; but  
“ now, though you are more ſtaid  
“ than of former Time, I find you  
“ a

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“a better Companion than ever.  
 “This last Visitt to *Sheepscote* hath  
 “evened your Spiritts.”

Poor *Father*! he knew not how  
 I lay awake and wept last Night,  
 for one I shall never see agayn, nor  
 how the Terrace Walk minded me  
 of him. My Spiritts may seem even,  
 and I exert myself to please; but,  
 within, all is dark Shade, or at best,  
 grey Twilight; and my Spiritts are,  
 in Fact, worse here than they were  
 at *Sheepscote*, because, here, I am  
 continuallie thinking of one whose  
 Name is never uttered; whereas,  
 there, it was mentioned naturallie  
 and tenderlie, though sadly. . . .

I will forthe to see some of the  
 poor Folk.

Same  
 Night

Resolved to make the Circuit of  
 the Cottages, but onlie reached the  
 first, wherein I found poor *Nell* in  
 such

of Mary Powell.

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such Grief of Body and Mind, that I was avised to wait with her a long Time. Askt why she had not sent to us for Relief; was answered she had thought of doing soe, but was feared of making too free. After a lengthened Visitt, which seemed to relieve her Mind, and certaynlie relieved mine, I bade her Farewell, and at the Wicket met my Father coming up with a playn-favoured but scholarlike looking reverend Man. He sayd, “*Moll*, I could not “think what had become of you.” I answered, I hoped I had not kept him waiting for Dinner—poor *Nell* had entertayned me longer than I wisht, with the Catalogue of her Troubles. The Stranger looking attentively at me, observed that may be the poor Woman had entértayned an Angel unawares; and added, “Doubt not, Madam, we woulde  
“rather

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“ rather await our Dinner than that  
“ you should have curtayled your  
“ Message of Charity.” Hithertoe,  
my Father had not named this  
Gentleman to me; but now he sayd,  
“ Child, this is the Reverend: Doctor  
“ *Jeremy Taylor*, Chaplain in Ordi-  
“ narie to his Majesty, and whom  
“ you know I have heard more than  
“ once preach before the King since  
“ he abode in *Oxford*.” Thereon  
I made a lowly Reverence, and we  
walked homewards together. At  
first, he discoursed chiefly with my  
Father on the Troubles of the Times,  
and then he drew me into the Dia-  
logue, in the Course of which I let  
fall a Saying of Mr. *Agnew's*, which  
drew from the reverend Gentleman  
a respectfulle Look I felt I no Way  
deserved. Soe then I had to explain  
that the Saying was none of mine,  
and felt ashamed he shoulde suppose  
me

me wiser than I was, especiallie as he commended my Modesty. But we progressed well, and he soon had the Discourse all to himself, for Squire *Paice* came up, and detained *Father*, while the Doctor and I walked on. I could not help reflecting how odd it was, that I, whom Nature had endowed with such a very ordinarie Capacitie, and scarce anie Taste for Letters, shoulde continuallie be thrown into the Companie of the cleverest of Men,—first, Mr. *Milton*; then Mr. *Agnew*; and now, this Doctor *Jeremy Taylor*. But, like the other two, he is not merely clever, he is Christian and good. How much I learnt in this short Interview! for short it seemed, though it must have extended over a good half Hour. He sayd, “Per-  
“haps, young Lady, the Time may  
“come when you shall find safer  
“Solace

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“ Solace in the Exercise of the  
“ Charities than of the Affections.  
“ Safer : for, not to consider how a  
“ successfull or unsuccessful Pass-  
“ sion for a human Being of like In-  
“ firmities with ourselves, oft stains  
“ and darkens and shortens the Cur-  
“ rent of Life, even the chastened  
“ Love of a Mother for her Child,  
“ as of *Octavia*, who swooned at ‘*Tu,*  
“ *Marcellus, eris,*’—or of Wives for  
“ their Husbands, as *Artemisia* and  
“ *Laodamia*, sometimes amounting  
“ to Idolatry—nay, the Love of  
“ Friend for Friend, with alle  
“ its sweet Influences and ani-  
“ mating Transports, yet exceed-  
“ ing the Reasonableness of that of  
“ *David* for *Jonathan*, or of our  
“ blessed *Lord* for *St. John* and the  
“ Family of *Lazarus*, may procure  
“ far more Torment than Profit:  
“ even if the Attachment be reci-  
“ procal,

*of Mary Powell.*

“procal, and well grounded, and  
“equallie matcht, which often it  
“is not. Then interpose human  
“Tempers, and Chills, and Heates,  
“and Slyghtes fancied or intended,  
“which make the vext Soul readie  
“to wish it had never existed. How  
“smalle a Thing is a human Heart!  
“you might grasp it in your little  
“Hand; and yet its Strifes and  
“Agonies are enough to distend a  
“Skin that should cover the whole  
“World! But, in the Charities,  
“what Peace! yea, they distill Sweet-  
“nesse even from the Unthankfulle,  
“blessing him that gives more than  
“him that receives; while, in the  
“Main, they are laid out at better  
“Interest than our warmest Affec-  
“tions, and bring in a far richer  
“Harvest of Love and Gratitude.  
“Yet, let our Affections have their  
“fitting Exercise too, staying our-  
“selves

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“ selves with the Reflection, that  
 “ there is greater Happinesse, after  
 “ alle Things sayd, in loving than  
 “ in being loved, save by the *God* of  
 “ Love who first loved us, and that  
 “ they who dwell in Love dwell in  
 “ *Him*.”

Then he went on to speak of the manifold Acts and Divisions of Charity; as much, methought, in the Vein of a Poet as a Preacher; and he minded me much of that Scene in the tenth Book of the *Fairie Queene*, soe lately read to us by Mr. *Agnew*, wherein the *Red Cross Knight* and *Una* were shown *Mercy* at her Work.

Aug 10

A Pack-horse from *Sheepscote* just reported, laden with a goodlie Store of Books, besides fundrie smaller Tokens of *Rose's* thoughtfulle Kindnesse. I have now methodicallie divided

of Mary Powell.

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divided my Time into stated Hours, of Prayer, Exercise, Study, Housewifery, and Acts of Mercy, on however a humble Scale; and find mine owne Peace of Mind thereby increased notwithstanding the Darknesse of publick and Dullnesse of private Affairs.

Made out the Meaning of “Cynofure” and “Cimmerian Darknesse.” . . . .

Full sad am I to learn that Mr. *Milton* hath published another Book in Advocacy of Divorce. Alas, why will he chafe against the Chain, and widen the cruel Division between us? My Father is outrageous on the Matter, and speaks soe passionatelie of him, that it is worse than not speaking of him at alle, which latelie I was avised to complain of.

*Dick*

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Aug 30

*Dick* beginneth to fancie himself in Love with *Audrey Paice*—an Attachment that will doe him noe good : his Tastes alreadie want raising, and she will onlie lower them, I feare,—a comely, romping, noisie Girl, that, were she but a Farmer's Daughter, woulde be the Life and Soul of alle the Whitsun-ales, Harvest-homes, and Hay-makings in the Country : in short, as fond of idling and merrymaking as I once was myself: onlie I never was soe riotous.

I beginne to see Faults in *Dick* and *Harry* I never saw before. Is my Taste bettering, or my Temper worsenning? At alle Events, we have noe cross Words, for I expect them not to alter, knowing how hard it is to doe soe by myself.

I look forward with Pleasure to my *Sheepscote* Visitt. Dear Mother  
returneth

of Mary Powell.

returneth to-morrow. Good Dr. *Taylor* hath twice taken the Trouble to walk over from *Oxford* to see me, but he hath now left, and we may never meet agayn. His Visitts have beene very precious to me: I think he hath some Glimmering of my sad Case: indeed, who knows it not? At parting he sayd, smiling, he hoped he should yet hear of my making Offerings to *Viriplaca* on *Mount Palatine*; then added, gravelie, “You know where reall  
“ Offerings may be made and alwaies  
“ accepted—Offerings of spare Half-  
“ hours and Five-minutes, when  
“ we shut the Closet Door and  
“ commune with our own Hearts  
“ and are still.” Alsoe he sayd,  
“ There are Sacrifices to make  
“ which sometimes wring our very  
“ Hearts to offer; but our gracious  
“ *God* accepts them neverthelesse,  
“ if

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“ if our Feet be really in the right  
 “ Path, even though, like *Chryseis*,  
 “ we look back, weeping.”

He sayd . . . . But how manie  
 Things as beautifulle and true did  
 I hear my Husband say, which  
 passed by me like the idle Wind that  
 I regarded not!

Sept 8

*Harry* hath just broughte in the  
 News of his Majesty's Success in the  
 West. Lord *Effex's* Army hath  
 beene completely surrounded by the  
 royal Troops; himself forc't to escape  
 in a Boat to *Plymouth*, and all the  
 Arms, Artillerie, Baggage, &c., of  
*Skippon's* Men have fallen into the  
 Hands of the King. *Father* is soe  
 pleased that he hath mounted the  
 Flag, and given double Allowance  
 of Ale to his Men.

I wearie to hear from *Robin*.

*Sheepscote,*

*Sheepscote, Oct. 10.*

How sweete a Picture of rurall Life did *Sheepscote* present, when I arrived here this Afternoon ! The Water being now much out, the Face of the Countrie presented a new Aspect : there were Men threshing the Walnut Trees, Children and Women putting the Nuts into Osier Baskets, a Bailiff on a white Horse overlooking them, and now and then galloping to another Party, and splashing through the Water. Then we found Mr. *Agnew* equallie busie with his Apples, mounted half Way up one of the Trees, and throwing Cherry Pippins down into *Rose's* Apron, and now and then making as though he would pelt her : onlie she dared him, and woulde not be frightened. Her Donkey, chewing Apples in  
the

1644.

the Corner, with the Cider running out of his Mouth, presented a ludicrous Image of Enjoyment, and 'twas evidently enhanc'd by 'Giles' brushing his rough Coat with a Birch Besom, instead of minding his owne Businesse of sweeping the Walk. The Sun, shining with mellow Light on the mown Grass and fresh clipt Hornbeam Hedges, made even the commonest Objects distinct and cheerfull; and the Air was soe cleare, we coulde hear the Village Children afar'off at their Play.

*Rose* had abundance of delicious new Honey in the Comb, and Bread hot from the Oven, for our earlie Supper. *Dick* was tempted to stay too late; however, he is oft as late, now, returning from *Audrey Paice*, though my Mother likes it not.

*Rose*

*Rose* is quite in good Spiritts now, and we goe on most harmoniouſſie and happilie. Alle our Taſtes are now in common; and I never more enjoyed this Union of Secluſion and Society. Beſides, Mr. *Agnew* is more than commonlie kind, and never ſpeaks ſternlie or ſharplie to me now. Indeed, this Morning, looking thoughtfullie at me, he ſayd, “ I know not, *Couſin*, what Change  
“ has come over you, but you are  
“ now alle that a wiſe Man coulde  
“ love and approve.” I ſayd, It muſt be owing then to Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who had done me more goode, it woulde ſeeme, in three Leſſons, than he or Mr. *Milton* coulde imparte in thirty or three hundred. He ſayd he was inclined to attribute it to a higher Source than that; and yet, there was doubtleſſe a great Knack in teaching, and  
there

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there was a good deal in liking the Teacher. He had alwaies hearde the Doctor spoken of as a good, pious, and clever Man, though rather too high a Prelatist. I sayd, "There were good Men of alle  
"Sorts: there was Mr. *Milton*, who  
"woulde pull the Church down;  
"there was Mr. *Agnew*, who woulde  
"onlie have it mended; and there  
"was Dr. *Jeremy Taylor*, who was  
"content with it as it stood." Then *Rose* askt me of the puritanicall Preachers. Then I showed her how they preached, and made her laugh. But Mr. *Agnew* woulde not laugh. But I made him laugh at last. Then he was angrie with himself and with me; only not very angry; and sayd, I had a Right to a Name which he knew had beene given me, of "cleaving  
"Mischief." I knew not he knew  
of

of Mary Powell.

of it, and was checked, though I  
laught it off.

Walking together, this Morning,  
*Rose* was avised to say, “ Did Mr.  
“ *Milton* ever tell you the Adventures  
“ of the *Italian Lady* ? ” “ Rely on  
“ it he never did,” sayd Mr. *Agnew*.  
—“ *Milton* is as modest a Man as  
“ ever breathed—alle Men of first  
“ class Genius are soe.” “ What  
“ was the Adventure ? ” I askt, curi-  
ouslie. “ Why, I neede not tell  
“ you, *Moll*, that *John Milton*, as a  
“ Youth, was extremelie handsome,  
“ even beautifull. His Colour came  
“ and went soe like a Girl’s, that  
“ we of *Christ’s College* used to call  
“ him ‘the Lady,’ and thereby annoy  
“ him noe little. One summer  
“ Afternoone he and I and young  
“ *King* (*Lycidas*, you know) had  
“ started on a country Walk, (the  
“ Countrie

1644.

“ Countrie is not pretty, round  
“ *Cambridge*) when we met in with  
“ an Acquaintance whom *Mr. Milton*  
“ affected not, soe he sayd he would  
“ walk on to the first rising Ground  
“ and wait us there. On this  
“ rising Ground stood a Tree, be-  
“ neath which our impatient young  
“ Gentleman presentlie cast him-  
“ self, and, having walked fast, and  
“ the Weather being warm, soon  
“ falls asleep as sound as a Top.  
“ Meantime, *King* and I quit our  
“ Friend and saunter forward pretty  
“ easilie. Anon comes up with us  
“ a Caroehe, with something I know  
“ not what of outlandish in its Build;  
“ and within it, two Ladies, one of  
“ them having the sayrest Face I  
“ ever set Eyes on, present Com-  
“ panie duly excepted. The Ca-  
“ roche having passed us, *King* and I  
“ mutuallie express our Admiration,  
“ and

of Mary Powell.

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“ and thereupon, preferring Turf  
“ to Duft, got on the other Side  
“ the Hedge, which was not soe  
“ thick but that we could make out  
“ the Caroché, and see the Ladies  
“ descend from it, to walk up the  
“ Hill. Having reached the Tree,  
“ they paused in Surprise at seeing  
“ *Milton* asleep beneath it; and in  
“ prettie dumb Shew, which we  
“ watcht sharplie, exprest their Ad-  
“ miration of his Appearance and  
“ Posture, which woulde have suited  
“ an *Arcadian* well enough. The  
“ younger Lady, hastilie taking  
“ out a Pencil and Paper, wrote  
“ something which she laughingly  
“ shewed her Companion, and then  
“ put into the Sleeper's Hand.  
“ Thereupon, they got into their  
“ Caroché, and drove off. *King*  
“ and I, dying with Curiositie to  
“ know what she had writ, soon  
“ roused

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“ roused our Friend and posselt  
 “ ourselves of the Secret. The  
 “ Verses ran thus. . . .

*Occhi, Stelle mortali,  
 Ministre de miei Mali,  
 Se, chiusi, m' uccidete,  
 Aperti, che farete ?*

“ Milton coloured, crumpled them  
 “ up, and yet put them in his  
 “ Pocket; then askt us what the  
 “ Lady was like. And herein lay  
 “ the Pleasantry of the Affair; for  
 “ I truly told him ‘she had a Pear-  
 “ shaped Face, lustrous black Eyes,  
 “ and a Skin that shewed ‘*il bruno*  
 “ *il bel non toglie;*’ whereas, King,  
 “ in his Mischief, drew a fancy  
 “ Portrait, much liker you, Moll,  
 “ than the Incognita, which hit  
 “ Milton’s Taste soe much better,  
 “ that he was believed for his Payns;  
 “ and then he declared that I had  
 “ beene

“beene describing the Duenna! . . .  
“Some Time after, when *Milton*  
“beganne to talk of visiting *Italy*,  
“we bantered him, and sayd he was  
“going to look for the Incognita.  
“He stoode it well, and sayd, ‘Laugh  
“on! do you think I mind you?  
“Not a Bit.’ I think he did.”

Just at this Turn, Mr. *Agnew* stumbled at something in the long Grass. It proved to be an old, rustie Horse-pistol. His Countenance changed at once from gay to grave. “I thought we had noe  
“such Things hereabouts yet,” cried he, viewing it askance.—“I suppose  
“I mighte as well think I had found  
“a Corner of the Land where there  
“was noe originall Sin.” And soe, flung it over the Hedge.

——First class Geniuses are alwaies modest, are they?—Then I should say that young *Italian* Lady’s

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Lady's Genius was not of the first Class.

Oct. 19.

. Speaking, to-day, of Mr. *Waller*, whom I had once seen at Uncle *John's*, Mr. *Agnew* sayd he had obtayned the Reputation of being one of our smoothest Versers, and thereupon brought forth one or two of his small Pieces in Manuscript, which he read to *Rose* and me. They were addrest to the Lady *Dorothy Sydney*; and certainlie for specious Flatterie I doe not suppose they can be matcht; but there is noe Impress of reall Feeling in them. How diverse from my Husband's Versing! He never writ anie mere Love-verses, indeede, soe far as I know; but how much truer a Sence he hath of what is reallie beautifulle and becoming in a Woman than Mr. *Waller*! The Lady *Alice Egerton*

of Mary Powell.

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*Egerton* mighte have beene more justlie proud of the fine Things written *for* her in *Comus*, than the Lady *Dorothea* of anie of the fine Things written *of* her by this cour-tier-like Poet. For, to say that Trees bend down in homage to a Woman when she walks under them, and that the healing Waters of *Tonbridge* were placed there by Nature to compensate for the fatal Pride of *Sacharissa*, is soe fullesome and untrue as noe Woman, not devoured by Conceite, coulde endure; whereas, the Check that Villanie is sensible of in the Prefence of Virtue, is most nobly, not extravagantlie, exprest by *Comus*. And though my Husband be almost too lavish, even in his short Pieces, of classic Allusion and Personation, yet, like antique Statues and Busts well placed in some statelie Pleasaunce, they are alwaies appropriate

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priate and gracefulle, which is more than can be sayd of Mr. *Waller's* overstrayned Figures and Metaphors.

Oct. 20.

News from Home: alle well. *Audrey Paice* on a Visitt there. I hope *Mother* hath not put her into my Chamber, but I know that she hath sett so manie Trays full of Spearmint, Peppermint, Camomiles, and Poppie-heads in the blue Chamber to dry, that she will not care to move them, nor have the Window opened lest they shoulde be blown aboute. I wish I had turned the Key on my ebony Cabinett.

Oct. 21.

*Richard* and *Audrey* rode over here, and spent a noisic Afternoone. *Rose* had the Goose dressed which I know she meant to have reserved for to-morrow. *Clover* was in a Heat, which one would have thoughte he needed

of Mary Powell.

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needed not to have beene, with carrying a Lady; but *Audrey* is heavie. She treats *Dick* like a Boy; and, indeede he is not much more; but he is quite taken up with her. I find she lies in the blue Chamber, which she says smells rarelie of Herbs. They returned not till late, after sundrie Hints from Mr. *Agnew*.

Alas, alas, *Robin's* Silence is too sorrowfullie explained! He hath beene sent Home soe ill that he is like to die. This Report I have from *Diggory*, just come over to fetch me, with whom I start, soe soone as his Horse is bated. Lord, have Mercie on *Robin*.

The Children are alle sent away to keep the House quiete.

*At Robin's Bedside.*

Oh, woefulle Sight! I had not  
known

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known that pale Face, had I met it unawares. So thin and wan,—and he hath shot up into a tall Stripling during the last few Months. These two Nights of Watching have tried me forelie, but I would not be withholden from sitting up with him yet agayn—what and if this Night should be his last? how coulde I forgive myself for sleeping on now and taking my Rest? The first Night, he knew me not; yet it was bitter-sweet to hear him chiding at sweet *Moll* for not coming. Yesternight he knew me for a While, kissed me, and fell into an heavie Sleepe, with his Hand locked in mine. We hoped the Crisis was come; but 'twas not soe. He raved much of a Man alle in red, riding hard after him. I minded me of those Words, “The Enemy sayd, I will overtake, “I will pursue,”—and, noe one being by,

of Mary Powell.

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by, save the unconscious Sufferer, I kneeled down beside him, and most earnestlie prayed for his Deliverance from all spirituall Adversaries. When I lookt up, his Eyes, larger and darker than ever, were fixt on me with a strange, wistfulle Stare, but he spake not. From that Moment he was quiete.

The Doctor thought him rambling this Morning, though I knew he was not, when he spake of an Angel in a long white Garment watching over him and kneeling by him in the Night.

Poor *Nell* fitteth up with *Mother* to-night—right thankfule is she to find that she can be of anie Use: she says it seems soe strange that she should be able to make any Return for my Kindnesse. I must sleep to-night, that I may watch to-morrow.

The

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The Servants are nigh spent, and are besides foolishlie afrayd of Infection. I hope *Rose* prays for me. Soe drowfie and dulle am I, as scarce to be able to pray for myself.

Monday.

*Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* come to abide with us for some Days. How thankfulle am I! Tears have relieved me.

*Robin* worse to-day. *Father* quite subdued. Mr. *Agnew* will sit up to-night, and insists on my sleeping.

*Crab* howled under my Window yesternight as he did before my Wedding. I hope there is nothing in it. *Harry* got up and beat him, and at last put him in the Stable.

Tuesday.

After two Nights' Rest, I feel quite strengthened and restored this Morning. Deare *Rose* read me to sleep in her low, gentle Voice, and then lay down by my Side, twice stepping

of Mary Powell.

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stepping into *Robin's* Chamber during the Night, and bringing me News that all was well. Relieved in Mind, I slept heavilie nor woke till late. Then, returned to the sick Chamber, and found *Rose* bathing dear *Robin's* Temples with Vinegar, and changing his Pillow—his thin Hand rested on Mr. *Agnew*, on whom he lookt with a composed, collected Gaze. Slowlie turned his Eyes on me, and faintlie smiled, but spake not.

Poor dear *Mother* is ailing now. I fate with her and *Father* some Time; but it was a true Relief when *Rose* took my Place and let me return to the sick Room. *Rose* hath alreadie made severall little Changes for the better; improved the Ventilation of *Robin's* Chamber, and prevented his hearing soe manie Noises. Alsoe, showed me how to make a pleasant cooling

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cooling Drink, which he likes better than the warm Liquids, and which she assures me he may take with perfect Safetie.

Same  
Evening

*Robin* vext, even to Tears, because the Doctor forbids the use of his cooling Drink, though it hath certainlie abated the Fever. At his Wish I stept down to intercede with the Doctor, then clofetted with my Father, to discourse, as I supposed, of *Robin's* Symptoms. Insteade of which, found them earnestlie engaged on the never-ending Topick of Cavaliers and Roundheads. I was chafed and cut to the Heart, yet what can poor *Father* do; he is useles in the Sick-room, he is wearie of Suspense, and 'tis well if publick Affairs can divert him for an odd Half-hour.

The Doctor would not hear of  
*Robin*

*Robin* taking the cooling Beverage, and warned me that his Death would be upon my Head if I permitted him to be chilled: soe what could I doe? Poor *Robin* very impatient in consequence; and raving towards Midnight. *Rose* insisted in taking the last Half of my Watch.

I know not that I was ever more forelie exercised than during the first Half of this Night. *Robin*, in his crazie Fit, would leave his Bed, and was soe strong as nearlie to master *Nell* and me, and I feared I must have called *Richard*. The next Minute he fell back as weak as a Child: we covered him up warm, and he was overtaken either with Stupor or Sleep. Earnestlie did I pray it might be the latter, and conduce to his healing. Afterwards, there being writing Implements at Hand, I wrote a Letter  
to

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to Mr. *Milton*, which, though the Fancy of sending it soon died away, yet eased my Mind. When not in Prayer, I often find myself silently talking to him.

Wednesday.

Waking late after my scant Night's Rest, I found my Breakfast neatlie layd out in the little Antechamber, to prevent the Fatigue of going down Stairs. A Handfulle of Autumn Flowers beside my Plate, left me in noe Doubt it was *Rose's* doing; and Mr. *Agnew* writing at the Window, told me he had perswaded my Father to goe to *Shotover* with *Dick*. Then laying aside his Pen, stept into the Sick-chamber for the latest News, which was good: and, sitting next me, talked of the Progress of *Robin's* Illnesse in a grave yet hopefull Manner; leading, as he chiefly does, to high  
and

and unearthlie Sources of Consolation. He advised me to take a Turn in the fresh Ayr, though but as far as the two Junipers, before I entered *Robin's* Chamber, which, somewhat reluctantlie, I did; but the bright Daylight and warm Sun had no good Effect on my Spiritts: on the Contrarie, nothing in blythe Nature seeming in unison with my Sadnesse, Tears flowed without relieving me.

——What a solemne, pompous Prigge is this Doctor! He cries “humph!” and “aye!” and bites his Nails and screws his Lips together, but I don't believe he understands soe much of Physick, after alle, as Mr. *Agnew*.

*Father* came Home fulle of the Rebels' Doings, but as for me, I shoulde hear them thundering at our Gate with Apathie, except insofar as I feared their distressing *Robin*.

*Audrey*

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*Audrey* rode over with her Father, this Morn, to make Enquiries. She might have come sooner had she meant to be anie reall Use to a Family she has thought of entering. Had *Rose* come to our Help as late in the Day, we had been poorlie off.

Thursday.

May *Heaven* in its Mercy save us from the evil Consequence of this new Mischance!—*Richard*, jealous at being allowed so little Share in nursing *Robin*, whom he sayd he loved as well as anie did, would sit up with him last Night, along with *Mother*. Twice I heard him snoring, and stept in to prevail on him to change Places, but could not get him to stir. A third Time he fell asleep, and, it seems, *Mother* slept too; and *Robin*, in his Fever, got out of Bed and drank near a Quart of

of colde Water, waking *Dick* by setting down the Pitcher. Of course the Bustle soon reached my listening Ears. *Dick*, to do him Justice, was frightened enough, and stole away to his Bed without a Word of Defence; but poor *Mother*, who had been equallie off her Watch, made more Noise about it than was good for *Robin*; who, neverthelesse, we having warmlie covered up, burst into a profuse Heat, and fell into a sound Sleep, which hath now holden him manie Hours. Mr. *Agnew* augureth favourablie of his waking, but we await it in prayerfulle Anxietie.

——The Crisis is past! and the Doctor sayeth he alle along expected it last Night, which I cannot believe, but *Father* and *Mother* doe. At alle Events, praised be *Heaven*, there is now hope that deare *Robin* may  
recover.

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recover. *Rose* and I have mingled Tears, Smiles, and Thanksgivings; Mr. *Agnew* hath expressed Gratitude after a more collected Manner, and endeavoured to check the somewhat ill-governed Expression of Joy throughout the House; warning the Servants, but especiallie *Dick* and *Harry*, that *Robin* may yet have a Relapse.

With what Transport have I sat beside dear *Robin's* Bed, returning his fixed, earnest, thankfull Gaze, and answering the feeble Pressure of his Hand!—Going into the Studdy just now, I found *Father* crying like a Child—the first Time I have known him give Way to Tears during *Robin's* Illness. Mr. *Agnew* presentlie came in, and composed him better than I could.

Saturday.

*Robin* better, though still very weak.

weak. Had his Bed made, and took a few Spoonfuls of Broth.

A very different Sabbath from the last. Though *Robin's* Constitution hath received a Shock it may never recover, his comparative Amendment fills us with Thankfulness; and our chastened Suspense hath a sweet Solemnitie and Trustfullness in it, which pass Understanding.

Mr. *Agnew* conducted our Devotions. This Morning, I found him praying with *Robin*—I question if it were for the first Time. *Robin* looking on him with Eyes of such sedate Affection !

*Robin* still progressing. Dear *Rose* and Mr. *Agnew* leave us to-morrow, but they will soon come agayn. Oh faithful Friends !

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Can

1646  
April

Can Aniething equall the desperate Ingratitude of the human Heart? Testifie of it, Journall, agaynst me. Here did I, throughout the incessant Cares and Anxieties of *Robin's* Sicknesse, find, or make Time, for almoste dailie Record of my Trouble; since which, whole Months have passed without soe much as a scrawled Ejaculation of Thankfullenesse that the Sick hath beene made whole.

Yet, not that that Thankfullenesse hath beene unfelt, nor, though unwritten, unexpressed. Nay, O *Lord*, deeplie, deeplie have I thanked thee for thy tender Mercies. And he healed soe slowlie, that Suspense, as 'twere, wore itself out, and gave Place to a dull, mournful Persuasion that an Hydropsia would waste him away, though more slowlie, yet noe less surelie than the Fever.

Soe

of Mary Powell.

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Soe Weeks lengthened into Months, I mighte well say Years, they seemed soe long! and stille he seemed to neede more Care and Tenderneffe; till, just as he and I had learnt to say, “Thy Will, O *Lord*, be done,” he began to gain Flesh, his craving Appetite moderated, yet his Food nourished him, and by *God’s* Blessing he recovered!

During that heavie Season of Probation, our Hearts were unlocked, and we spake oft to one another of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth. Afterwards, our mutuall Reserves returned, and *Robin*, methinks, became shyer than before, but there can never cease to be a dearer Bond between us. Now we are apart, I aim to keep him mindfulle of the high and holie Resolutions he formed in his Sickneffe; and though he never answers these

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these Portions of my Letters, I am avised to think he finds them not displeasing.

Now that *Oxford* is like to be besieged, my Life is more confined than ever; yet I cannot, and will not leave *Father* and *Mother*, even for the *Agnews*, while they are so much harassed. This Morning, my Father hath received a Letter from Sir *Thomas Glemham*, requiring a larger Quantitie of winnowed Wheat, than, with alle his Loyaltie, he likes to fend.

April 23

*Ralph Hewlett* hath just looked in to say, his Father and Mother have in Safetie reached *London*, where he will shortlie joyn them, and to ask, is there anie Service he can doe me? Ay, truly; one that I dare not name—he can bring me Word of Mr. *Milton*, of his Health,  
of

of his Looks, of his Speech, and whether . . . . .

*Ralph* shall be noe Messenger of mine.

Talking of Money Matters this Morning, *Mother* sayd Something that brought Tears into mine Eyes. She observed, that though my Husband had never beene a Favourite of hers, there was one Thing wherein she must say he had behaved generously: he had never, to this Day, askt *Father* for the 500*l.* which had brought him, in the first Instance, to *Forest Hill*, (he having promised old Mr. *Milton* to try to get the Debt paid,) and the which, on his asking for my Hand, *Father* tolde him shoulde be made over sooner or later, in lieu of Dower.

Did *Rose* know the Bitter-sweet she was imparting to me, when she  
gave

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gave me, by Stealth as 'twere, the  
latelic publisht Volume of my Hus-  
band's *English* Versing? It hath  
beene my Companion ever since;  
for I had perused the *Comus* but by  
Snatches, under the Disadvantage  
of crabbed Manuscript. This Mor-  
ning, to use his owne deare Words:—

*I sat me down to watch, upon a Bank,  
With Ivy canopied, and interwove  
With flaunting Honeysuckle, and be-  
ganne,  
Wrapt in a pleasing Fit of Melancholie,  
To meditate.*

The Text of my Meditation was  
this, drawne from the same loved  
Source :—

*This I hold firm;  
Virtue may be assayed, but never hurt,  
Surprised by unjust Force, but not en-  
thralled;*

*Yea,*

of Mary Powell.

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*Yea, even that which Mischief meant  
most Harm,  
Shall, in the happy Trial, prove most  
Glory.*

But who hath such Virtue? have I? hath he? No, we have both gone astray, and done amiss, and wrought sinfullie; but I worst, I first, therefore more neede that I humble myself, and pray for both.

There is one, more unhappie, perhaps, than either. The *King*, most misfortunate Gentleman! who knoweth not which Way to turn, nor whom to trust. Last Time I saw him, methought never was there a Face soe full of Woe.

The *King* hath escaped! He gave Orders overnight at alle the Gates, for three Persons to passe; and, accompanied onlie by Mr. *Ashburnham*,

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*burnham*, and Mr. *Hurd*, rode forth at Nightfalle, towards *London*. Sure, he will not throw himselfe into the Hands of Parliament?

*Mother* is affrighted beyond Measure at the near Neighbourhood of *Fairfax's* Army, and entreats *Father* to leave alle behind, and flee with us into the City. It may yet be done; and we alle share her Feares.

Saturday  
Even.

Packing up in greate haste, after a confused Family Council, wherein some fresh Accounts of the Rebels' Advances, broughte in by *Diggery*, made my Father the sooner consent to a stolen Flight into *Oxford*, *Diggery* being left behind in Charge. Time of Flight, to-morrow after Dark, the *Puritans* being busie at theire Sermons. The better the Day, the better the Deede.—*Heaven* make it soe!

*Oxford;*

*Oxford*; in most confined and unpleasant Lodgings; but noe Matter, manie better and richer than ourselves fare worse, and our King hath not where to lay his Head. 'Tis sayd he hath turned his Course towards *Scotland*. There are Souldiers in this House, whose Noise distracts us. Alsoe, a poor Widow Lady, whose Husband hath beene slayn in these Wars. The Children have taken a feverish Complaynt, and require incessant tending. Their Beds are far from cleane, in too little Space, and ill aired.

The Widow Lady goes about visiting the Sick, and would faine have my Companie. The Streets have displeased me, being soe full of Men; however, in a close Hood I have accompanied her fundrie Times. 'Tis a good Soul, and  
full

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full of pious Works and Alms-deedes.

May 27

*Diggory* hath found his Way to us, alle dismaied, and bringing *Dis-may* with him, for the Rebels have taken and ransacked our House, and turned him forthe. "A Plague on these Wars!" as *Father* says. What are we to doe, or how live, despoyled of alle? *Father* hath lost, one Way and another, since the Civil War broke out, three thousand Pounds, and is now nearlie beggared. *Mother* weeps bitterlie, and *Father's* Countenance hath fallen more than ever I saw it before. "Nine Children!" he exclaimed, just now; "and onlie one provided for!" His Eye fell upon me for a Moment, with less Tenderneffe than usuall, as though he wished me in *Aldersgate Street*.

I'm

I'm fure I wifh I were there,—  
not becaufe *Father* is in Misfortune;  
oh, no.

The Parliament requireth our unfortunate King to iffue Orders to this and alle his other Garrifons, commanding theire Surrender; and *Father*, finding this is likelie to take Place forthwith, is bufied in having himfelf comprifed within the Articles of Surrender. 'Twill be hard indeede, fhoulde this be denied. His Eftate lying in the King's Quarters, how coulde he doe lefs than adhere to his Majefty's Partie during this unnaturall War? I am fure *Mother* grudged the Royalifts everie Goose and Turkey they had from our Yard.

Praifed be *Heaven*, deare *Father* hath juft received Sir *Thomas Fairfax's* Protection, empowering him  
quietlie

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quietlie and without let to goe  
forthe “with Servants, Horfes,  
“Arms, Goods, etc.” to “*London*  
“or elſewhere,” whitherſoever he  
will. And though the Protection  
extends but over fix Months, at the  
Expiry of which Time, *Father* muſt  
take Meaſures to embark for ſome  
Place of Refuge beyond Seas, yet  
who knows what may turn up in  
thoſe fix Months! The King may  
enjoy his Owne agayn. Meantime,  
we immediatelie leave *Oxford*.

*Forest Hill.*

At Home agayn; and what a  
Home! Everieſthing to ſeeke, everie-  
thing miſplaced, broken, abuſed, or  
gone altogether! The Gate off its  
Hinges; the Stone Balls of the  
Pillars overthrowne, the great Bell  
ſtolen, the clipt Junipers grubbed  
up, the Sun-diall broken! Not a  
Hen

of Mary Powell.

---

Hen or Chicken, Duck or Duckling, left! *Crab* half-starved, and soe glad to see us, that he dragged his Kennel after him. *Daisy* and *Blanch* making such piteous Moans at the Paddock Gate, that I coulde not bear it, but helped *Lettice* to milk them. Within Doors, everie Room smelling of Beer and Tobacco; Cupboards broken open, etc. On my Chamber Floor, a greasy steeple-crowned Hat! Threw it forthe from the Window with a Pair of Tongs.

*Mother* goes about the House weeping. *Father* sits in his broken Arm-chair, the Picture of Disconsolateness. I see the *Agnews*, true Friends! riding hither; and with them a Third, who, methinks, is *Rose's* Brother *Ralph*.

*London. St. Martin's le Grand.*  
Trembling, weeping, hopefulle,  
dismaied,

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dismaied, here I sit in mine Uncle's hired House, alone in a Crowd, scared at mine owne Precipitation, readie to wish myselfe back, unable to resolve, to reflect, to pray . . . .

Twelve at  
Night.

Alle is silent; even in the latelie busie Streets. Why art thou cast down, my Heart? why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou stille in the *Lord*, for he is the Joy and Light of thy Countenance. Thou hast beene long of learning him to be such. Oh, forget not thy Lesson now! Thy best Friend hath sanctioned, nay, counselled this Step, and overcome alle Obstacles, and provided the Means of this Journey; and to-morrow at Noone, if Events prove not cross, I shall have Speech of him whom my Soul loveth. To-night, let me watch, fast, and pray.

How

How awfulle it is to beholde a  
Man weepe! mine owne Tears, when  
I think thereon, well forthe . . . . .

*Rose* was a true Friend when she  
sayd, "Our prompt Affections are oft  
"our wise Counsellors." Soe, she  
suggested and advised alle; wrung  
forthe my Father's Consent, and sett  
me on my Way, even putting Money  
in my Purse. Well for me, had  
she beene at my Journey's End as  
well as its Beginning.

'Stead of which, here was onlie  
mine Aunt; a slow, timid, uncertayn  
Soule, who proved but a broken  
Reed to lean upon.

Soe, alle I woulde have done  
arighte went croffe, the Letter  
never delivered, the Message delayed  
till he had left Home, soe that me-  
thought I shoulde goe crazie.

While the Boy, stammering in  
his lame Excuses, bore my chafed  
Reproaches

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Reproaches the more humblie because he saw he had done me some grievous Hurt, though he knew not what, a Voice in the adjacent Chamber in Alternation with mine Uncle's, drove the Blood of a suddain from mine Heart, and then sent it back with impetuous Rush, for I knew the Accents right well.

Enters mine Aunt, alle flurried, and hushing her Voice. "Oh, "Niece, he whom you wot of is "here, but knoweth not you are at "Hand, nor in *London*. Shall I tell "him?"

But I gasped, and held her back by her Skirts; then, with a suddain secret Prayer, or Cry, or maybe, Wish, as 'twere, darted up unto Heaven for Assistance, I took noe Thought what I shoulde speak when confronted with him, but opening the Door between us, he then standing

standing with his Back towards it, rushed forth and to his Feet—there sank, in a Gush of Tears; for not one Word coulde I proffer, nor soe much as look up.

A quick Hand was laid on my Head, on my Shoulder—as quicklie removed. . . . . and I was aware of the Door being hurriedlie opened and shut, and a Man hasting forth; but 'twas onlie mine Uncle. Meantime, my Husband, who had at first uttered a suddain Cry or Exclamation, had now left me, sunk on the Ground as I was, and retired a Space, I know not whither, but methinks he walked hastilie to and fro. Thus I remained, agonized in Tears, unable to recal one Word of the humble Appeal I had pondered on my Journey, or to have spoken it, though I had known everie Syllable by Rote; yet not wishing myself, even in that  
Suspense,

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Suspense, Shame, and Anguish, elsewhere than where I was cast, at mine Husband's Feet.

Or ever I was aware, he had come up, and caught me to his Breast: then, holding me back soe as to look me in the Face, sayd, in Accents I shall never forget,

“ Much I coulde say to reproach,  
“ but will not! Henceforth, let us  
“ onlie recall this darke Passage  
“ of our deeplie sinfull Lives, to  
“ quicken us to *God's* Mercy in  
“ affording us this Re-union. Let  
“ it deepen our Penitence, enhance  
“ our Gratitude.”

Then, suddainlie covering up his Face with his Hands, he gave two or three Sobs; and for some few Minutes coulde not refrayn himself; but, when at length he uncovered his Eyes and looked down on me with Goodness and Sweetnesse, 'twas like

like the Sun's cleare shining after  
Raine. . . . .

Shall I now destroy the disgrace-  
fulle Records of this blotted Book?  
I think not; for 'twill quicken me  
perhaps, as my Husband sayth, to  
“ deeper Penitence and stronger  
“ Gratitude,” shoulde I henceforthe  
be in Danger of settling on the Lees,  
and forgetting the deepe Waters  
which had nearlie closed over mine  
Head. At present, I am soe joyfulle,  
soe light of Heart under the Sense  
of Forgivenessse, that it seemeth as  
though Sorrow coulde lay hold of  
me noe more; and yet we are still,  
as 'twere, disunited for awhile; for  
my Husband is agayn shifting House,  
and preparing to move his increased  
Establishment into *Barbican*, where  
he hath taken a goodly Mansion;  
and, until it is ready, I am to abide  
here.

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here. I might pleasantlie cavill at this; but, in Truth, will cavill at Nothing now.

I am, by this, full perswaded that *Ralph's* Tale concerning *Miss Davies* was a false Lie; though, at the Time, supposing it to have some Colour, it inflamed my Jealousie noe little. The cross Spight of that Youth led, under his Sister's Management, to an Issue his Malice never forecast; and now, though I might come at the Truth for Inquiry, I will not soe much as even soil my Mind with thinking of it agayn; for there is that Truth in mine Husband's Eyes, which woulde silence the Slanders of a hundred Liars. Chafed, irritated, he has beene, soe as to excite the sarcastic Constructions of those who wish him evill; but his Soul, and his Heart, and his Mind require a Flighte beyond

beyond *Ralph's* Witt to comprehend; and I know and feel that they are *mine*.

He hath just led in the two *Phillips's* to me, and left us together. *Jack* lookt at me askance, and held aloof; but deare little *Ned* threw his Arms about me and wept, and I did weep too; seeing the which, *Jack* advanced, gave me his Hand, and finally his Lips, then lookt as much as to say, "Now, *Alle's* right." They are grown, and are more comely than heretofore, which, in some Measure, is owing to their Hair being noe longer cut strait and short after the Puritanicall Fashion I soe hate, but curled like their Uncle's.

I have writ, not the Particulars, but the Issue of my Journey, unto *Rose*, whose loving Heart, I know, yearns for Tidings. Alsoe, more  
brieflie

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brieflie unto my Mother, who loveth not Mr. *Milton*.

*Barbican.*

September.

In the Night-season, we take noe Rest; we search out our Hearts, and commune with our Spiritts, and checque our Souls' Accounts, before we dare court our Sleep; but in the Day of Happinesse we cut shorte our Reckonings; and here am I, a joyfulle Wife, too proud and busie amid my dailie Cares to have Leisure for more than a brief Note in my *Diarium*, as *Ned* woulde call it. 'Tis a large House, with more Rooms than we can fill, even with the *Phillips's* and their Scholar-mates, olde Mr. *Milton*, and my Husband's Books to boot. I feel Pleasure in being housewifelie; and reape the Benefit of alle that I learnt of this Sorte at *Sheepscote*. Mine Husband's  
Eyes

Eyes follow me with Delight; and once with a perplexed yet pleased Smile, he sayd to me, “Sweet Wife, “thou art strangelie altered; it “seems as though I have indeede “lost ‘sweet *Moll*’ after alle!”

Yes, I am indeed changed; more than he knows or coulde believe. And he is changed too. With Payn I perceive a more stern, severe Tone occasionallie used by him; doubtlesse the Cloke assumed by his Griefe to hide the Ruin I had made within. Yet a more geniall Influence is fast melting this away. Agayn, I note with Payn that he complayns much of his Eyes. At first, I observed he rubbed them oft, and dared not mention it, believing that his Tears on Account of me, sinfull Soule! had made them smart. Soe, perhaps, they did in the first Instance, for it appears they have beene ailing ever  
since

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since the Year I left him; and Overstuddy, which my Presence mighte have prevented, hath conduced to the same ill Effect. Whenever he now looks at a lighted Candle, he sees a Sort of Iris alle about it; and, this Morning, he disturbed me by mentioning that a total Darknesse obscured everie Thing on the left Side of his Eye, and that he even feared, sometimes, he might eventuallie lose the Sight of both. "In "which Case," he cheerfully sayd, "you, deare Wife, must become "my Lecturer as well as Amanuensis, and content yourself to read "to me a World of crabbed Books, "in Tongues that are not nor neede "ever be yours, seeing that a Woman "has ever enough of her own!"

Then, more pensivelie, he added, "I discipline and tranquillize my "Mind on this Subject, ever remembering,

“membering, when the Appre-  
“hension afflicts me, that, as Man  
“lives not by Bread alone, but by  
“everie Word that proceeds out of  
“the Mouth of *God*, so Man like-  
“wise lives not by *Sight* alone, but  
“by Faith in the Giver of Sight.  
“As long, therefore, as it shall  
“please Him to prolong, however  
“imperfectlie, this precious Gift,  
“soe long will I lay up Store  
“agaynst the Days of Darknesse,  
“which may be many; and when-  
“soever it shall please Him to  
“withdrawe it from me altogether,  
“I will cheerfully bid mine Eyes  
“keep Holiday, and place my Hand  
“trustfullie in His, to be led whi-  
“thersoever He will, through the  
“Remainder of Life.”

A Honeymoon cannot for ever  
last; nor Sense of Danger, when  
it

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it long hath past;—but one little Difference from out manie greater Differences between my late happie Fortnighte in *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, and my present dailie Course in *Barbican*, hath marked the Distinction between Lover and Husband. There it was “sweet *Moll*,” “my Heart's Life of Life,” “my dearest cleaving Mischief;” here 'tis onlie “Wife,” “Mistress *Milton*,” or at most “deare or sweet Wife.” This, I know, is masterfulle and seemly.

Onlie, this Morning, chancing to quote one of his owne Lines,

*These Things may startle well, but  
not astounde,—*

he sayd, in a Kind of Wonder,  
“Why, *Moll*, whence had you  
“that? — Methought you hated  
“Versing, as you used to call it.  
“When

“ When learnt you to love it? ” I hung my Head in my old foolish Way, and answered, “ Since I learnt “ to love the Verfer.” “ Why, this “ is the best of Alle ! ” he hastily cried, “ Can my sweet Wife be in- “ deede Heart of my Heart and “ Spirit of my Spirit? I lost, or “ drove away a Child, and have “ found a Woman.” Thereafter, he less often wifed me, and I found I was agayn sweet *Moll*.

This Afternoon, *Christopher Milton* lookt in on us. After saluting me with the usuall Mixture of Malice and Civilitie in his Looks, he fell into easie Conversation; and presently says to his Brother quietly enough, “ I saw a curious Penny- “ worth at a Book-stall as I came “ along this Morning.” “ What “ was that? ” says my Husband, brightening up. “ It had a long “ Name,

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“ Name,” says *Christopher*, — “ I  
“ think it was called *Tetrachordon*.”  
My Husband cast at me a suddain,  
quick Look, but I did not see much  
as change Colour; and quietlie con-  
tinued my Sewing.

“ I wonder,” says he, after a Pause,  
“ that you did not invest a small  
“ Portion of your Capitall in the  
“ Work, as you say ’twas soe greate  
“ a Bargain. However, Mr. *Kit*,  
“ let me give you one small Hint  
“ with alle the goode Humour  
“ imaginable; don’t take Advantage  
“ of our neare and deare Relation  
“ to make too frequent Opportunities  
“ of saying to me Anything that  
“ would certainlie procure for “an-  
“ other Man a Thrashing !”

Then, after a short Silence be-  
tweene Alle, he suddainlie burst out  
laughing, and cried, “ I know ’tis  
“ on the Stalls; I’ve seene it, *Kit*,  
“ myself !”

“ myself! Oh, had you seene, as  
“ I did, the Blockheads poring over  
“ the Title, and hammering at it  
“ while you might have walked to  
“ *Mile End* and back!”

“ That’s Fame, I suppose,” says  
*Christopher* drylie, and then goes  
off to talk of some new Exercise of  
the Prefs-licenser’s Authoritie, which  
he seemed to approve, but it kindled  
my Husband in a Minute.

“ What Folly! what Nonsense!”  
cried he, smiting the Table; “ these  
“ *Jacks* in Office sometimes devise  
“ such senselesse Things that I really  
“ am ashamed of being of their  
“ Party. Licence, indeed! their  
“ Licence! I suppose they will  
“ shortlie license the Lengthe of  
“ *Moll’s* Curls, and regulate the  
“ Colour of her Hoode, and forbid  
“ the Larks to sing within Sounde of  
“ *Bow Bell*, and the Bees to hum  
“ o’

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“ o’ *Sundays*. Methoughte I had  
 “ broken *Mabbot’s* Teeth two Years  
 “ ago; but I must bring forthe a  
 “ new Edition of my *Areopagitica* ;  
 “ and I’ll put your Name down, *Kit*,  
 “ for a hundred Copies !”

October

Though a rusticall Life hath ever  
 had my Suffrages, Nothing can be  
 more pleasant than our regular  
 Course. We rise at five or sooner :  
 while my Husband combs his Hair,  
 he commonly hums or sings some  
 Psalm or Hymn, versing it, maybe,  
 as he goes on. Being drest, *Ned*  
 reads him a Chapter in the *Hebrew*  
*Bible*. With *Ned* stille at his Knee,  
 and me by his Side, he expounds  
 and improves the Same ; then, after  
 a shorte, heartie Prayer, releases us  
 both. Before I have finished my  
 Dressing, I hear him below at his  
 Organ, with the two Lads, who  
 sing

of Mary Powell.

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sing as well as Choristers, hymning Anthems and *Gregorian* Chants, now soaring up to the Clouds, as 'twere, and then dying off as though some wide echoing Space lay between us. I usuallie find Time to tie on my Hoode and slip away to the Herb-market for a Bunch of fresh Radishes or Cressies, a Sprig of Parsley, or at the leaste a Posy, to lay on his Plate. A good wheaten Loaf, fresh Butter and Eggs, and a large Jug of Milk, compose our simple Breakfast; for he likes not, as my Father, to see Boys hacking a huge Piece of Beef, nor cares for heavie feeding, himself. Onlie, olde Mr. *Milton* sometimes takes a Rasher of toasted Bacon, but commonly, a Bafin of Furmity, which I prepare more to his Minde than the Servants can.

After Breakfast, I well know the  
Boys'

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Boys' Lessons will last till Noone. I therefore goe to my Closett Duties after my *Forest Hill* Fashion; thence to Market, buy what I neede, come Home, look to my Maids, give forthe needfulle Stores, then to my Needle, my Books, or perchance to my Lute, which I woulde faine play better. From twelve to one is the Boys' Hour of Pastime; and it may generallie be sayd, my Husband's and mine too. He draws aside the green Curtain,—for we sit mostly in a large Chamber shaped like the Letter T, and thus divided while at our separate Duties: my End is the pleasantest, has the Sun most upon it, and hath a Balcony overlooking a Garden. At one, we dine; always on simple, plain Dishes, but drest with Neatnesse and Care. Olde Mr. *Milton* sits at my right Hand and says Grace; and, though grow-  
ing

*of Mary Powell.*

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ing a little deaf, enters into alle the livelie Discourse at Table. He loves me to help him to the tenderest, by Reason of his Lossie of Teeth. My Husband careth not to sitt over the Wine; and hath noe sooner finished the Cheese and Pippins than he reverts to the Viol or Organ, and not onlie sings himself, but will make me sing too, though he sayth my Voice is better than my Ear. Never was there such a tunefulle Spiritt. He alwaies tears himself away at laste, as with a Kind of Violence, and returns to his Books <sup>at</sup> ~~at~~ six o' the Clock. Meantime, his old Father dozes, and I sew at his Side.

From six to eight, we are seldom without Friends, chance Visitants, often scholarlike and witty, who tell us alle the News, and remain to partake a light Supper. The Boys enjoy this Season as much as I doe, though

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though with Books before them, their Hands over their Ears, pretending to con the Morrow's Tasks. If the Guests chance to be musicall, the Lute and Viol are brought forth, to alternate with Roundelay and Madrigal: the old Man beating Time with his feeble Fingers, and now and then joining with his quavering Voice. (By the way, he hath not forgotten to this Hour, my imputed Crime of losing that Song by *Harry Lawes*: my Husband takes my Part, and sayth it will turn up some Day when leaste expected, like *Justinian's Pandects*.) Hubert brings him his Pipe and a Glas of Water, and then I crave his Blessing and goe to Bed; first, praying ferventlie for alle beneath this deare Roof, and then for alle at *Sheepscote* and *Forest Hill*.

On Sabbaths; besides the publick Ordinances

of Mary Powell.

Ordinances of Devotion, which I cannot, with alle my striving, bring myself to love like the Services to which I have beene accustomed, we have much Reading, Singing, and Discourfing among ourfelves. The Maids fing, the Boys fing, *Hubert* fings, olde *Mr. Milton* fings; and trulie with foe much of it, I woulde fometimes as lief have them quiete. The *Sheepscote* Sundays fuited me better. The Sabbath Exercife of the Boys is to read a Chapter in the *Greek* Testament, heare my Husband expounde the fame; and write out a System of Divinitie as he dictates to them, walking to and fro. In liftening thereto, I find my Pleasure and Profit.

I have alfoe my owne little Catechifing, after a humbler Sorte, in the Kitchen, and fome poore Folk to relieve and confole, with my Husband's

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band's Concurrence and Encouragement. Thus, the Sabbath is devoutlie and happilie passed.

My Husband alsoe takes, once in a Fortnighte or soe, what he blythelie calls "a gaudy Day," equallie to his owne Content, the Boys', and mine. On these Occasions, it is my Province to provide colde Fowls or Pigeon Pie, which *Hubert* carries, with what else we neede, to the Spot selected for our Camp Dinner. Sometimes we take Boat to *Richmond* or *Greenwich*. Two young Gallants, Mr. *Alphrey* and Mr. *Miller*, love to joyn our Partie, and toil at the Oar, or scramble up the Hills, as merrilie as the Boys. I must say they deal savagelie with the Pigeon Pie afterwards. They have as wild Spiritts as our *Dick* and *Harry*, but withal a most wonderfull Reverence for my Husband,

Husband, whom they courte to read and recite, and provoke to pleasant Argument, never prolonged to Wearineffe, and seasoned with Frolic Jest and Witt. Olde Mr. *Milton* joyns not these Parties. I leave him alwaies to *Dolly's* Care, firste providing for him a Sweetbread or some smalle Relish, such as he loves. He is in Bed ere we return, which is oft by Moonlighte.

How soone must Smiles give Way to Tears! Here is a Letter from deare *Mother*, taking noe Note of what I write to her, and for good Reason, she is soe distraught at her owne and deare *Father's* ill Condition. The Rebels (I must call them such,) have soe stript and opprest them, they cannot make their House tenantable; nor have Aught to feede on, had they e'en a whole Roof over their Heads. The  
Neighbour-

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Neighbourhoode is too hot to hol them; olde Friends cowardlie a suspicious, olde and new Foes League together. Leave *Oxon* th must; but where to goe? *Fath* despite his broken Health and Hat of the Foreigner, must needes dep beyond Seas; at leaste within 1 six Months; but how, with emptie Purse, make his Way in strange Land, with a Wife and sev Children at his Heels? Soe er *Mother* with a “*Lord* have Mer “upon us!” as though her Hol were as surelie doomed to Destru tion as if it helde the Plague.

Mine Eyes were yet swollen wi Tears, when my Husband stept i He askt, “What ails you, precio “Wife?” I coulde but sigh, an give him the Letter. Having re the Same, he says, “But what, m “dearest? Have we not amp  
“Root

of Mary Powell.

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Room here for them alle? I speak as to Generalls, you must care for Particulars, and stow them as you will. There are plenty of small Rooms for the Boys; but, if your Father, being infirm, needes a Ground-floor Chamber, you and I will mount aloft."

I coulde but look my Thankfulle-esse and kifs his Hand. "Nay," e added, with increasfing Gentle-esse, "think not I have seene your Cares for my owne Father without loving and bleffing you. Let Mr. *Powell* come and see us happie; it may tend to make him foe. Let him and his abide with us, at the leaste, till the Spring; his Lads will studdy and play with mine, your Mother will help you in your Housewiferie, the two olde Men will chirp together beside the *Christmasse* Hearth; and, if I  
" find

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“ find thy Weeklie Bills the heavi  
 “ ’twill be but to write anoth  
 “ Book, and make a better Barga  
 “ for it than I did for the la  
 “ We will use Hospitalitie witho  
 “ grudging; and, as for your ow  
 “ Increase of Cares, I suppose ’twi  
 “ be but to order two Legs of Mutton  
 “ insteade of one!”

And soe, with a Laugh, left me  
 most joyfulle, happy Wife! to draw  
 Sweete out of Sowre, Delighte out  
 of Sorrowe; and to summon mine  
 owne Kindred aboute me, and wipe  
 away theire Tears, bid them eat  
 drink, and be merry, and shew  
 myselfe to them, how proud, how  
 cherished a Wife!

Surelie my Mother will learne to  
 love *John Milton* at last! If she  
 doth not, this will be my secre  
 Crosse, for ’tis hard to love dearlie  
 two Persons who

*of Mary Powell.*

another. But she will, she must, not onlie respect him for his Uprightnesse and Magnanimitie, coupled with what himselfe calls "an honest Haughtinesse and Self-esteem," but *like* him for his kind and equall Temper, (*not* "harsh and crabbed," as I have heard or call it,) his easie Flow of Mirth, his Manners, unaffectedlie cheerful; his Voice, musically; his Person, beautifull; his Habitt, graceful; his Hospitalitie, naturall to him; his Purse, Countenance, Time, Trouble, at his Friend's Service; his devotion, humble; his Forgiveness, heavenlie! May it please God that my Mother shall like *John Milton*! . . . .

F I N I S.